Motoring / C1

How to save fuel

News / A3

Erap wants leave for mother's 99th birthday

Lifestyle / E1

Pinoy food the way mom cooks it

Business / B1

Sy camp rethinks Equitable PCI buy-in

Tanong ng Bayan / A18

Ano na ba ang voters' list?

NGAYONG ALAS-10 NG GABI SA ABC

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'Filipinos have bad teeth, some share 1 toothbrush'

DIS IS DA WAY I BRUSH MY...

By Blanche S. Rivera

FILIPINOS are known all over the world as a smiling people.

Even if the state of their teeth is not something to smile about.

FILIPINOS/ A6

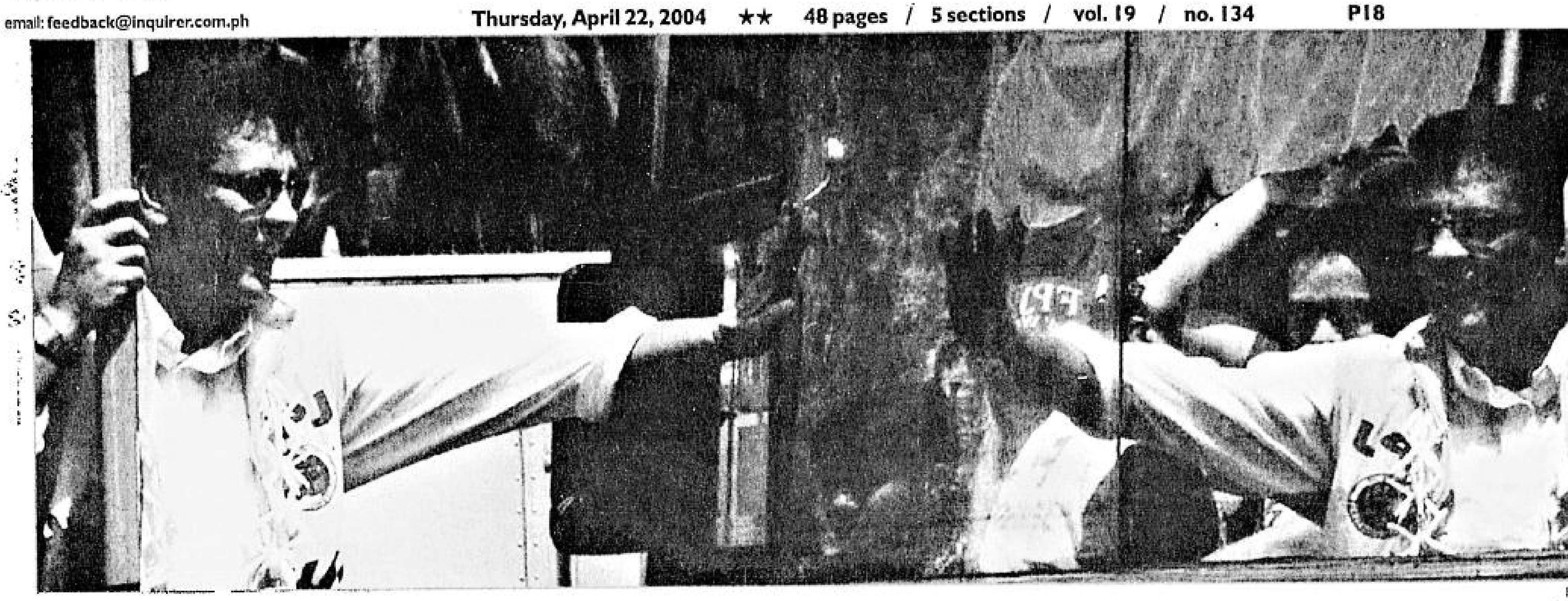
FPJ leads in Ibon survey; Loren overtakes Noli

By Volt Contreras

THE BATTLE of surveys continues. This time the incumbent President is still trailing an actor, but the gap has been narrowed to a "very surmountable" level, according to a private research group.

Results of a nationwide survey conducted

FPJ/ A5



TAKE IT from former President Ramos, whose advice is for a Lacson-Poe unity ticket in order for the opposition to have a fighting chance against his own candidate, President Macapagal. (Left) Ramos' choice for vice president, FPJ.

PDI PHOTO

GMA foes plan Edsa rally

Opposition unites to hit funds abuse

By Michael Lim Ubac

IS EDSA IV coming?

Or is it only in the minds of those who want President Macapagal-Arroyo out of the Palace?

With only 19 days left before the May 10 elections, opponents of Ms Macapagal said yesterday they were joining forces for a huge rally—tentatively scheduled for May 1—to denounce her alleged misuse of power to ensure her victory at the polls.

Presidential candidate Raul Roco's campaign strategist, Jaime Galvez-Tan, predicted the planned protest action would draw crowds on the scale of the Edsa "People Power II" revolt in 2001, which drove Joseph Estrada from Malacañang.

Representatives from the camps of presidential candidates—Roco, Fernando Poe Jr., Panfilo Lacson and Eddie Villanueva—were now talking to ensure the attendance of their standard-bearers, Galvez-Tan told a news forum at the Sitio Fernandina in Greenhills, San Juan.

"This will be big. We expect an Edsa Dos crowd," declared Galvez-Tan.

He expressed confidence that Roco—in the United States for medical treatment of a chronic back pain—would be back in time for the planned mass mobilization of opposition forces.

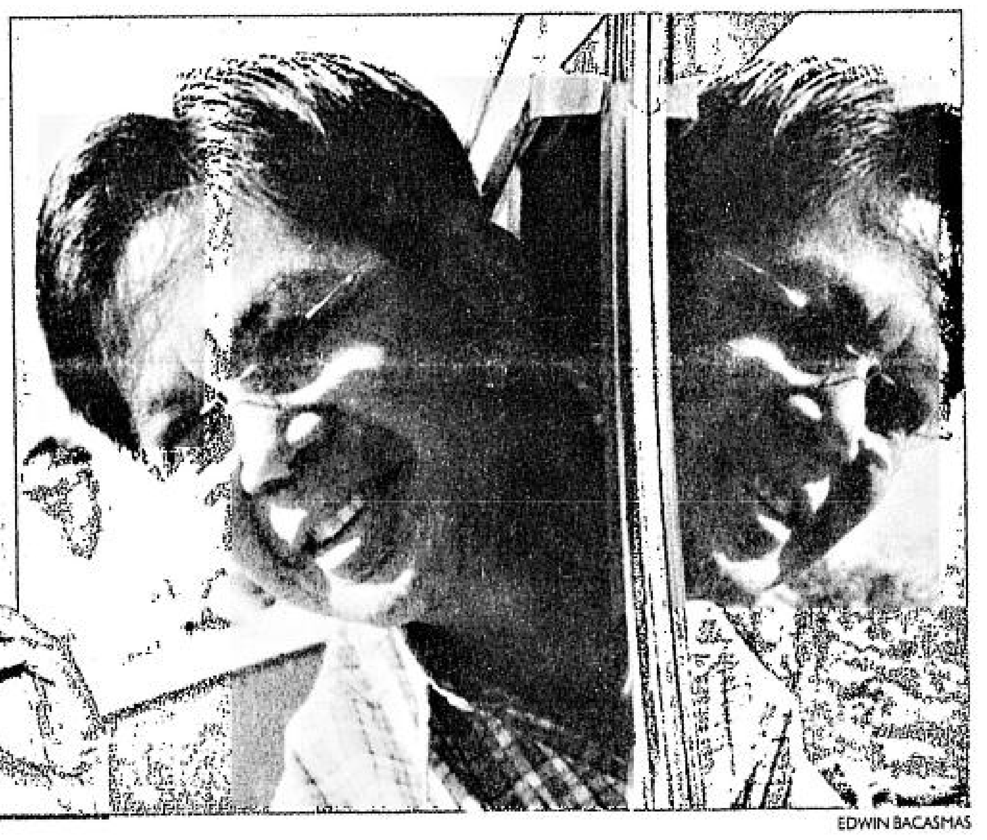
"We will not call for her resignation but (will only) condemn her acts," Galvez-Tan stressed.

The exact date and venue of the protest have yet to be finalized, he said.

Galvez-Tan said the plan was being spearheaded not only by political parties but also by a multi-sectoral alliance composed of the civil society, party-list

GMA/ A8

ESTRADA counters: "Can No. I back out for No. 4?" He's also reminding Lacson of his promise last year to back out of the race if he's unable to gain enough nationwide support. (Right) Double exposure for "No. 4" (in the surveys) as he campaigns in Cotabato City on Wednesday.



EDWIN BACASMAS

'Super-egos' blocking opposition unity

By Rosa-May V. de Guzman and Norman Bordadora

COTABATO CITY—A clash of "super-egos" is what is preventing his meeting with Fernando Poe Jr., Sen. Panfilo "Ping" Lacson said yesterday.

"You can imagine a superstar and a supercop [wanting to talk] but the super-ego comes into play, so there's no super-happening," Lacson told reporters after his campaign rally.

Asked if there was still time for the unification of the opposition, he replied: "Yes and no." He said the talks could still take place one day before the elections.

But there's just one condition, he said: "If unification would mean my withdrawal, then forget it."

Lacson said that even if he slid down for Poe, the support of Chinese-Filipino businessmen was non-transferable.

"I don't think the financial support is transferable because these are personal displays of gratitude for favors done in the past that can't be transferred. No matter how I appeal to them, it seems they're only committed to me," he said.

Lacson made the remarks after an

SUPER-EGOS/ A8

FVR tells FPJ: Slide down for Lacson

By Margaux Ortiz and Armand N. Nocum

TWO EX-PRESIDENTS yesterday expressed divergent views on the proposed unification of the opposition, with Fidel Ramos saying actor Fernando Poe Jr. should give way to Sen. Panfilo "Ping" Lacson and Joseph Estrada saying it should be the other way around.

Speaking at a press conference, Ramos said Poe's giving way to Lacson was "a logical and obvious recourse because the president represents the country in the international community."

Ramos, chair emeritus of the ruling Lakas-CMD, said the elected leader would carry the responsibility of convincing foreign organizations that the Philippines had a "credible government." Besides, he said, the country needed a man with experience in public service like Lacson, who, he noted, had turned in a "reasonably credible performance."

But Estrada, the recognized

FVR/ A8

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

OUT-PATIENT ON THE MEND?

Conferring with his doctor at an unnamed hospital in Houston, Texas, Raul Roco and wife Sonia appear to be in high spirits. Roco is expected to return early next week to resume his campaign for the presidency.

'OPERATION RED SEA'

Bro. Eddie believers start house-to-house, malls, buses campaign

By Blanche S. Rivera

IN AN attempt to "deflect claims that they are running a losing campaign," supporters of evangelist Eduardo Villanueva launched an army of millions which would "ensure the victory of national renewal and change on May 10."

Dubbed Operation Red Sea, the project entails the deployment of three million supporters in neighborhoods, malls, markets, buses, MRT and LRT lines, and other public places to convince and "convert" voters to cast their votes for Villanueva.

Red Sea stands for regional empowerment and deployment for a systematic and effective army. It involves the 3.2 million members of the Josiah's Army, a group of recruits from evangelical, Catholic and Muslim groups all over the country.

"Operation Red Sea will ensure our victory," Villanueva said in a statement yesterday, expressing confidence that despite his poor survey ratings, he can win the May 10 elections.

Only about 20 percent of the people involved in the operation were members of the Jesus is Lord Church Worldwide, which Villanueva founded 25 years ago.

Villanueva said that if his party was able to gather 2.8 million people in his grand proclamation rally at the Rizal Park in Manila in February, and more than two million on-line signatures supporting his candidacy, the army could turn the tide for him on May 10.

(Aerial photos of the Villanue-

BRO. EDDIE/ A5

DIMAPORO

Ali, Lanao kingpin, dies at 95

By Christine Godinez-Ortega
PDI Mindanao Bureau

CAGAYAN DE ORO CITY—Former Muslim strongman Ali Dimaporo, a long time ally of late Presi-

ALI/ A6

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
THURSDAY, APRIL 22, 2004
E-mail: pr_news@inquirer.com.ph

Second FRONTPAGE

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SOURCE: PAGASA

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Laoag	Partly Cloudy	**Tacloban**	Partly Cloudy
Clark Zone	Partly Cloudy	**Gen. Santos**	Partly Cloudy
Tagaytay	Partly Cloudy	**Zamboanga**	Partly Cloudy
Legazpi	Partly Cloudy	**Cagayan de Oro**	Partly Cloudy
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COMPILED BY RAY LEYESA, PDI RESEARCH/04/22/04

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The suspect, Redendo Cain Dellosa, claimed he was tortured into signing a confession.

Police said the Abu Sayyaf also planned to bomb malls, trains, an oil depot, foreign embassies and other targets in Manila. *AP*

Danding at SMC helm 'no problem' for Palace

By Gil C. Cabacungan

MALACAÑANG said it had no problem with controversial businessman Eduardo "Danding" Cojuangco retaining control of San Miguel Corp. because the food and beverage conglomerate has been well-managed and earning well since he regained control in 1998.

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The Presidential Commission on Good Government, which is disputing Cojuangco's ownership of 20 percent of SMC shares, failed to get the one seat it needed to take control of SMC which it sequestered as part of the disputed assets of the late dictator Ferdinand Marcos and his associates.

The PCGG, the agency tasked to recover the ill-gotten assets, alleges that Marcos and Cojuangco used funds from the illegal levy imposed on coconut farmers to acquire the SMC shares.

No complaints

"The government has no complaints about the results of the elections considering that the conglomerate has been well managed as exhibited by its record growth, expansion and profitability and we expect the conglomerate to continue on its course," said Bunye in a press briefing.

He said Cojuangco's continued stay in San Miguel was achieved through "the regular course of business" and not through a supposed presidential directive for the PCGG to drop its plan to gain control of the conglomerate.

"We should leave politics out of the situation and just accept the outcome," Bunye said.

San Miguel's profits have doubled to more than P6 billion annually since Cojuangco replaced Andres Soriano III as chair six years ago.

Cojuangco, who dropped his plan to run for President in the May polls after the President reneged on her supposed promise not to seek a full term, is much sought after for support in the elections because of his financial muscle and political machinery. The NPC is a key member of the so-called rainbow coalition in Congress.

Cojuangco has been non-committal about which presidential candidate he is supporting but he has allowed his party members to make their own choices.

Danding ally

The President's main rival, movie actor Fernando Poe Jr., is a known ally of Cojuangco and a long-time endorser of San Miguel Beer. This has led to speculation that Cojuangco wants him in Malacañang.

Ms Macapagal's campaign spokesperson Michael Defensor has insisted that Cojuangco virtually made his choice known when his legislator sons, Mark and Charlie, and nephew, Gilbert Teodoro, publicly declared their support for the President.

Bunye noted that the PCGG's initial plan to gain control through a proxy war with Cojuangco was not "firm" considering that this was dependent on having enough votes to elect the chair.

He said the President agreed with PCGG chair Haydee Yorac's stand that if the government had the numbers, it would have made a bid for control.

The PCGG, which already votes a 27 percent bloc of SMC shares giving it two seats, wants to gain control of the company to protect the government's interest in the firm.

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No go for Sy

But Sy decided to stick with Cojuangco who last year won provisional control over the disputed 20 percent shares, giving him three board seats. He continues to enjoy control of the board through other shareholders who are supportive, including Sy and Japan's Kirin Brewery.

"We have to deal with business realities. If you can't get majority control, you have to be satisfied with the status quo," Bunye said.

"The bottom line is whether the company is well run or is this beneficial to stockholders," he said.

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Cops gird for violence as tensions rise in Cavite

By Christian V. Esguerra and Marlon Ramos, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

THE LINES are drawn and the cops are ready.

Police have tightened their watch after Cavite Gov. Ereneo "Ayong" Maliksi and the Remulla clan broke political ties early this week.

Although the atmosphere in the province remains "calm," Senior Supt. Roberto Rosales, the provincial police director, yesterday said they're not taking any chances.

"When it comes to peace and order, we're more than ready; we want to be three steps ahead," he told the INQUIRER.

Rosales said he has mobilized groups of policemen to monitor the activities of "would-be troublemakers" in the bustling province.

Some of these personalities, he said, are known supporters of Maliksi, the Remulla clan, or Epimaco Velasco, the former National Bureau of Investigation chief who's trying to make a comeback by running for Cavite governor.

Armed with high-powered firearms, groups of at least 10 police officers will visit the houses of people in their watch list to "remind" them not to get involved in political violence.

"We will not threaten them," Velasco said. "We will just remind them that they're in our watch list."

Cavite has at least four private armed groups, according to a Philippine National Police report.

Two of the groups are said to be working for two influential politicians in the province. A third group is said to be composed of former police and military officers.

Rosales denied knowing if Maliksi, the Remullas, or Velasco maintain private armies. He said the last known group was maintained by a congressman.

One thing working in favor of the police is the signing of peace pacts among the three major political clans in the province. Quoting representatives, Rosales said the clans consider the coming elections as "intramurals," where competition is friendly.

"They told me they would never engage in political violence, that they would always give this reminder to their supporters," he said.

Whether the clans would keep their word remains to be seen.

What's clear is there's bad blood between Maliksi and the Remulla clan.

The feud started when Maliksi, the incumbent governor, abandoned Crispin "Boying" Remulla, the Magdalo party's candidate for the third congressional district, accusing the Remulla clan of "political warlordism."

"In the interest of justice and real democracy," Maliksi said he was supporting Remulla's rival, Silang Mayor Ruben Madlansacay.

Ironically, Crispin's brother, incumbent vice governor Juanito Victor "Johnvic" is Maliksi's running mate.

The Remullas expected Sen. Panfilo Lacson, who's honorary president of the Magdalo Party to resolve the issue and unite all their members. But Lacson failed to patch things up.

Another Remulla brother, Gilbert, second district representative, said his family was irked by what happened and was studying the possibility of withdrawing support from presidential candidate Sen. Panfilo Lacson.

"Definitely, Sen. Lacson has a say in the political party as our standard-bearer and honorary president. Unfortunately, he wasn't able to voice out his support for my brother (Crispin)," Gilbert, who's running for a second term, said, "But I believe he supports my brother."

AFP mobilized vs Reds

AMID an upsurge in poll-related rebel violence, President Macapagal-Arroyo ordered the military yesterday to help the police protect political candidates ahead of the May 10 elections.

Ms Macapagal condemned the abduction last weekend by the communist New People's Army of a town mayor and her staff who were campaigning in a rebel stronghold in Samar province. Less than two weeks earlier, NPA guerrillas also abducted a town mayor and vice mayor and four armed bodyguards in Oriental Mindoro. On Tuesday, two supporters of a gubernatorial candidate were shot dead in Albay province.

These "acts of terrorism ... this travesty of democracy ... shall be dealt with accordingly," the President said in a statement. "I am directing (the armed forces) to back up the PNP (Philippine National Police) in securing local candidates under threat."

Police statistics show that 63 political supporters and candidates for local positions have been killed, many of them by communist guerrillas, since the start of the campaign period on Dec. 15. Chief Supt. Joel Goltiao, PNP spokesperson, said 127 have been wounded. Other election-related incidents likewise increased, compared with the election period in 2001.

The NPA, armed wing of the Communist Party of the Philippines, has been extorting "permit-to-campaign fees" from local candidates in areas of rebel activity. Those who refuse to pay are often attacked.

Suspected members of the NPA's Arnulfo Ortiz Command snatched Mayor Chanita Gabieta of Jiabong, Western Samar, Vice Mayor Armingol Caub and several councilors last Sunday in nearby Motiong town. They were freed after paying P200,000 in PTC fees.

The Albay victims were campaigning for Ligao City Mayor Fernando Gonzales, who is running for governor. Ruben Quililan of Barangay Batang, and Jeremias Lladones, a retired police officer, were shot and killed by unknown assassins.

Armed Forces Public Information Office chief Lt. Col. Daniel Lucero dismissed views that local candidates were being forced to pay PTC fees because the military could not protect them. He said the recent abductions were successful because the candidates did not coordinate their activities with the military as they should.

Interior Secretary Jose Lina said the PNP was prepared to provide local officials with additional security, if they ask for it. *Juliet L. Javellana, Nelson F. Flores, Alcuin Papa, and Philip C. Tubeza, with Agence France-Presse*

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SOURCE PAGASA

COMPILED BY RAY LEYESA, PDI RESEARCH/04/22/04

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The Remullas expected Sen. Panfilo Lacson, who's honorary president of the Magdalo Party to resolve the issue and unite all their members. But Lacson failed to patch things up.

Another Remulla brother, Gilbert, second district representative, said his family was irked by what happened and was studying the possibility of withdrawing support from presidential candidate Sen. Panfilo Lacson.

"Definitely, Sen. Lacson has a say in the political party as our standard-bearer and honorary president. Unfortunately, he wasn't able to voice out his support for my brother (Crispin)." Gilbert, who's running for a second term, said, "But I believe he supports my brother."

AFP mobilized vs Reds

AMID an upsurge in poll-related rebel violence, President Macapagal-Arroyo ordered the military yesterday to help the police protect political candidates ahead of the May 10 elections.

Ms Macapagal condemned the abduction last weekend by the communist New People's Army of a town mayor and her staff who were campaigning in a rebel stronghold in Samar province. Less than two weeks earlier, NPA guerrillas also abducted a town mayor and vice mayor and four armed bodyguards in Oriental Mindoro. On Tuesday, two supporters of a gubernatorial candidate were shot dead in Albay province.

These "acts of terrorism ... this travesty of democracy ... shall be dealt with accordingly," the President said in a statement. "I am directing (the armed forces) to back up the PNP (Philippine National Police) in securing local candidates under threat."

Police statistics show that 63 political supporters and candidates for local positions have been killed, many of them by communist guerrillas, since the start of the campaign period on Dec. 15. Chief Supt. Joel Goltiao, PNP spokesperson, said 127 have been wounded. Other election-related incidents likewise increased, compared with the election period in 2001.

The NPA, armed wing of the Communist Party of the Philippines, has been extorting "permit-to-campaign fees" from local candidates in areas of rebel activity. Those who refuse to pay are often attacked.

Suspected members of the NPA's Arnulfo Ortiz Command snatched Mayor Chanita Gabieta of Jiabong, Western Samar, Vice Mayor Armingol Caub and several councilors last Sunday in nearby Motiong town. They were freed after paying P200,000 in PTC fees

The Albay victims were campaigning for Ligao City Mayor Fernando Gonzales, who is running for governor. Ruben Quililan of Barangay Batang, and Jeremias Lladones, a retired police officer, were shot and killed by unknown assassins.

Armed Forces Public Information Office chief Lt. Col. Daniel Lucero dismissed views that local candidates were being forced to pay PTC fees because the military could not protect them. He said the recent abductions were successful because the candidates did not coordinate their activities with the military as they should

Interior Secretary Jose Lina said the PNP was prepared to provide local officials with additional security, if they ask for it. *Juliet L. Javellana, Nelson F. Flores, Alcuin Papa, and Philip C. Tubeza, with Agence France-Presse*

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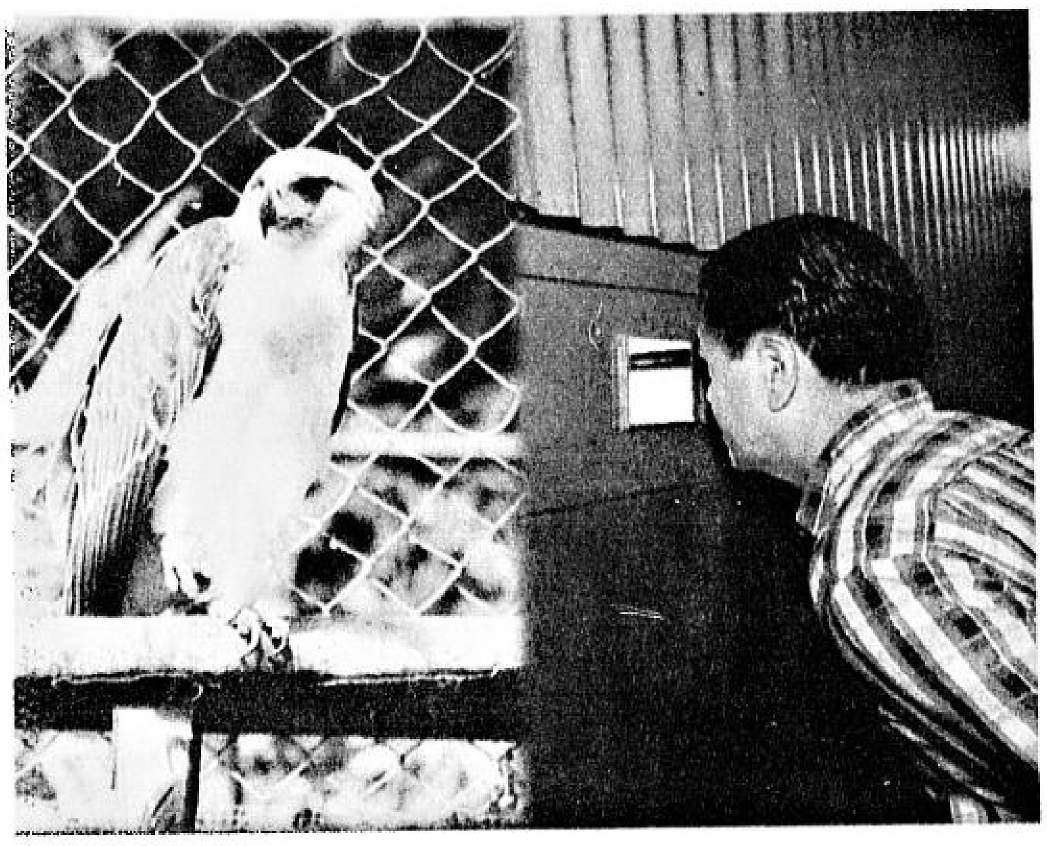

KABAYAN MEETS KABAYAN
Sen. Noli 'Kabayan' de Castro peers into the cage of 'Kabayan,' the Philippine eagle named after him, at the eagle's hack site in Mt. Apo, Kidapawan City, North Cotabato. Senator De Castro shouldered all expenses of the eagle since it was hatched in late 2002. 'Kabayan' will be freed into the wild today during the celebration of the International Earth Day.

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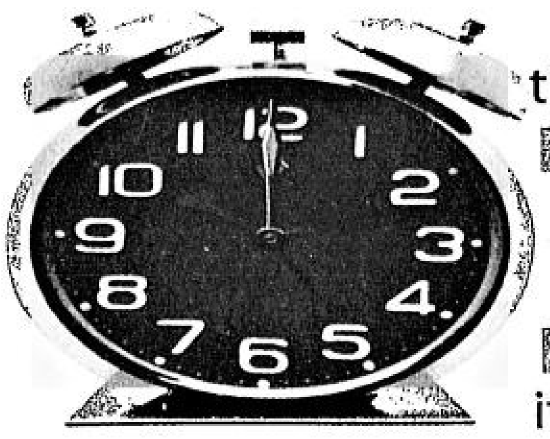

As we went to press this midnight, there were 83 928 940 Filipinos. In just 30 years, there will be 168 850 301 Filipinos-- if government fails to act.

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A MESSAGE FROM THE **PCCI** COMMITTEE ON POPULATION, CSR AND GOVERNANCE ♦ APRIL 22, 2004

CalPERS: Either vote of confidence or bargaining gain

By Carlito Pablo and Cynthia D. Balana

A VOTE of confidence, or a result of hard-nosed bargaining?

Administration critic and opposition senatorial candidate Francisco Tatad yesterday said Malacañang "played the Iraq card" to prevent the California Public Employees' Retirement System (CalPERS) from pulling out its investments here.

CalPERS (California Public Employees' Retirement System), the largest pension fund in the United States, earlier threatened to pull out its $80-million investments in the country, but decided Tuesday to retain the Philippines on its list of permissible investment sites.

But the country can expect better times ahead with a Macapagal-Arroyo victory in the May 10 presidential election, said two administration legislators, citing the CalPERS decision to stay put after it gave the Philippines high scores following three years of poor ratings.

CalPERS is based in Sacramento, California with $67 million in portfolio investments in the Philippines.

Davao City Rep. Vincent Garcia of the Nationalist People's Coalition said this was a sign of the President's stable leadership and her government's ability to bring about timely economic and market reforms.

"The best is yet to come after the President gets a fresh mandate," Garcia said, as he expressed confidence that the President's victory would boost investors' confidence and brighter business prospects.

Rep. Mayo Almario of Davao Oriental stressed that the CalPERS decision was an offshoot of the President's lead in the most recent Pulse Asia and Social Weather Station surveys that reinforced and heightened growing public perception of her victory in the elections.

Citing information from US diplomatic sources, Tatad said CalPERS' move was "not really a vote of confidence for the investment climate but a product of hard-nosed bargaining by Malacañang."

Tatad recalled that the Palace had earlier floated the idea that Manila was preparing to pull out troops from Iraq, only to clarify later that they would not leave.

Now, Erap wants leave for ma's 99th birthday

By Armand N. Nocum

AFTER recently being granted Holy Week and birthday furloughs, jailed ex-president Estrada is this time asking to be let out for the "rare occasion" of his nonagenarian mother's 99th birthday on May 2.

Estrada's lawyer Noel Malaya yesterday filed a motion with the Sandiganbayan anti-graft court to grant Estrada a 36-hour pass so he can be with his mother on her birthday at her house in Kennedy St., Greenhills, San Juan.

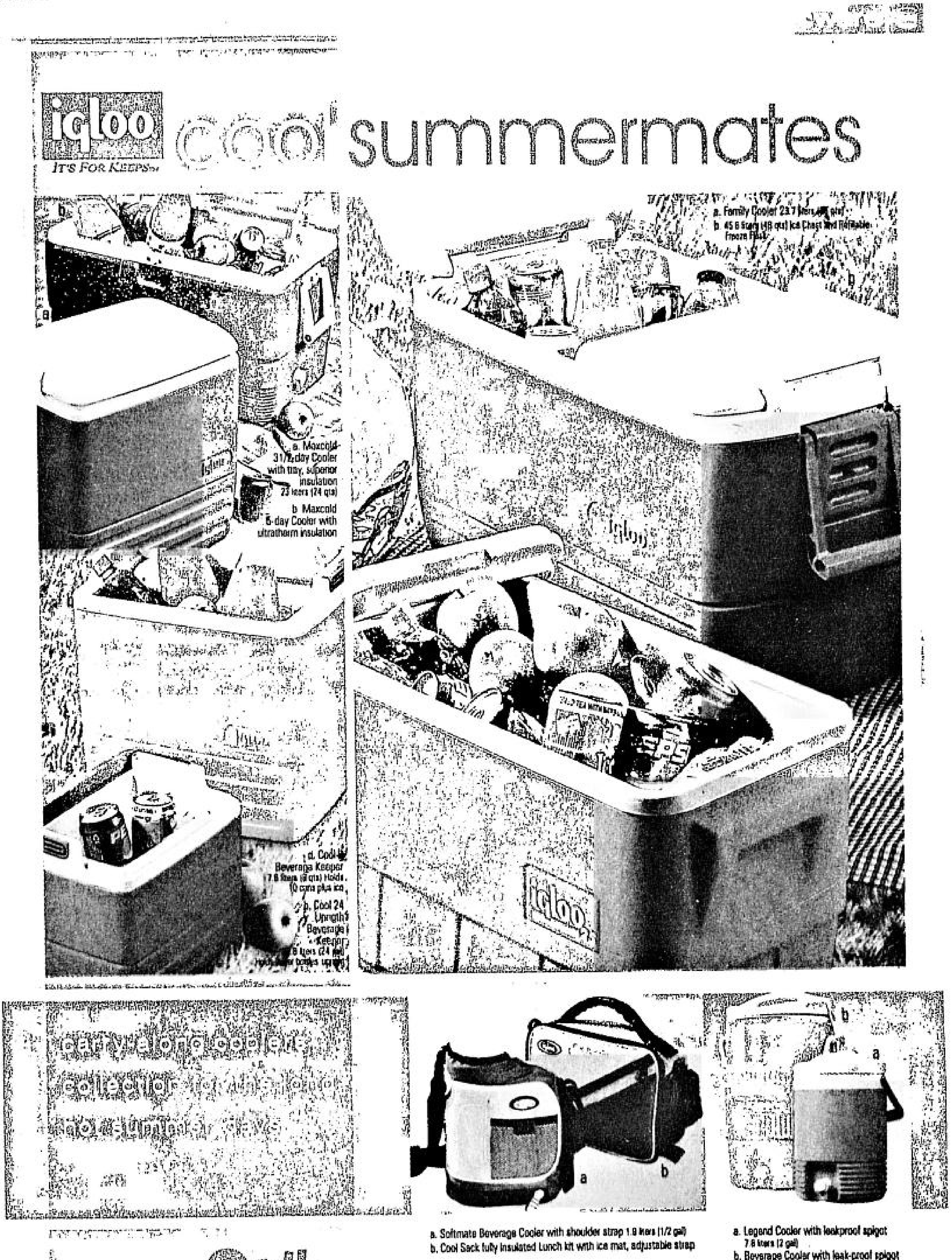
"To reach the age of 99 years now is a rare occasion and no child would pass the opportunity to be with his mother on that occasion," said Malaya, one of Estrada's four court-appointed lawyers.

Since his incarceration on graft and plunder charges three years ago, Malaya said Estrada has never had the chance of spending time with his mother on her birthday.

If the court grants the motion, it will be the fourth time this year that Estrada gets to leave his Camp Capinpin, Tanay, Rizal detention quarters.

The anti-graft court last month granted him leave to visit his mother when she was confined at the San Juan Medical Center.

Estrada is also seeking a 36-hour pass for him to vote in Greenhills on May 10, but prosecutors said they would oppose this. Three years ago, he cast his vote at the Veterans hospital.



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b. Maxcold 5-day Cooler with ultratherm insulation

a. Family Cooler 23.7 liters (25 qts)
b. 45.6 liters (48 qts) Ice Chest and Refillable Freeze Pack

d. Cool-It Beverage Keeper 7.6 liters (8 qts) Holds 10 cans plus ice
b. Cool 24 Upright Beverage Keeper 28 liters (24 qts) Holds [illegible] bottles upright

carry along coolers collection for the [illegible]

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b. Cool Sack fully Insulated Lunch kit with ice mat, adjustable strap

a. Legend Cooler with leakproof spigot 7.6 liters (2 gal)
b. Beverage Cooler with leak-proof spigot 18.9 liters (5 gal)

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Pinoy family facing deportation from US wins reprieve

SELAH, Washington—Three members of a family who were facing deportation to the Philippines have had their stay in the United States extended to 18 months for health reasons, their attorney said.

Tomas Aganda, wife Judy and daughter Jennylyn have been fighting a decade-long battle with federal immigration officials to remain in the United States.

Last week, they learned the US attorney's office for the Eastern District of Washington had extended their stay by one year for humanitarian reasons. Judy Aganda, 48, has been treated for brain cancer, and her doctors say she will require continued medical monitoring.

The family's attorney, Mitchell Broz, said Monday that the stay has been extended even longer.

"It's still pending in US District Court, but I discussed it with the assistant US attorney, William Beatty, and he's agreeable to extending the stay of deportation to a little over 18 months, until the end of Oct. 31, 2005," Broz said.

The Agandas entered the United States on tourist visas in 1990, opened a dry cleaning store in Selah, then sought to stay. They filed for political asylum in 1993, but were denied and lost a subsequent appeal to the 9th US Circuit Court of Appeals in 2001.

A US District Court judge granted a 60-day stay of the family's deportation order last summer after attorneys representing Judy Aganda argued her health would not permit her to be deported. The stay has been extended several times.

The extension still must be approved by US District Judge Fred Van Sickle, Broz said.

While the family was grateful for the extention, Broz said it would end about two months short of daughter Stephanie's 21st birthday. As a US citizen by birth, Stephanie Aganda can apply for a permanent visa for her parents and younger sister after age 21. *AP*

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Oslo talks postponed

OSLO, Norway—A new round of peace talks between the Philippine government and communist rebels has been postponed until after the country's May 10 national elections, the Philippine foreign secretary said Tuesday.

"I know most of the main players are quite occupied," Delia Domingo Albert said during a visit to Oslo.

The latest in a series of peace talks in the Norwegian capital ended April 3 with an agreement to meet again April 26-29, but the sides agreed to postpone the round until May 26-28 at a venue that is yet to be decided, said the Norwegian Foreign Ministry, which has hosted the talks.

A member of the Norwegian team, speaking on condition of anonymity, said the delay does not indicate any problems in the talks. It came about because some Philippine government negotiators are busy with the national elections, the Norwegian said.

The National Democratic Front has been fighting for a Marxist state since 1969, and has an armed wing of about 9,000 troops. The group has insisted on the government's help in getting it removed from terrorism lists by the United States and the European Union. *AP*

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Thursday, April 22, 2004
2nd Week of Easter

1st Reading:	**Acts 5:27-33**
Gospel:	**Jn 3:31-36**

Jesus said to Nicodemus, "He who comes from above is above all; he who comes from the earth belongs to the earth and his words, too, are earthly. The One who comes from heaven speaks of the things he has seen and heard; he bears witness to this but no one accepts his testimony. Whoever does receive his testimony acknowledges the truthfulness of God.

"The one sent by God speaks God's words and gives the Spirit without measure. For the Father loves the Son and has entrusted everything into his hands. Whoever believes in the Son lives with eternal life, but he who will not believe in the Son will never know life and always faces the justice of God."

Commentary

"The Father loves the Son and has entrusted everything into his hands." There are many similar phrases in John's gospel. "The Father loves the Son and shows him all that he is doing" (5:20). "Jesus knew that the Father had put everything into his hands" (13:3). "All that the Father has is mine" (16:15). "Now they know that everything you have given me comes from you" (17:7). The Son in turn gives everything to the Father, "All I have is yours, and all you have is mine" (17:10).

Then Jesus has given us everything, "I have made known to you everything I have learned from my Father" (15:15). "The glory you have given me, I have given them" (17:22). The word "everything" seems to be God's kind of word; and the word "all." It was the fundamental command, the "Schema Israel," "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength" (Dt 6:5). He is not interested in how much it amounts to, so long as it is everything: the widow's mite was "all she had to live on" (Mk 12:44). We may not have much, but we have everything! When we give everything we have we are being drawn into the life of the Trinity.

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SUPREME COURT DOCTRINES

POLITICAL LAW (ELECTORAL LAW)—Election protest—The failure to make specific mention of the precincts where widespread election fraud and irregularities occurred, and the bare allegations of massive fraud, widespread intimidation and terrorism, without specification and substantiation of where and how these occurrences took place, render the protest fatally defective. "The prescription that the petition must be sufficient in form and substance means that the petition must be more than merely rhetorical. If the allegations contained therein are unsupported by even the faintest whisper of authority in fact and law, then there is no other course than to dismiss the petition, otherwise, the assumption of an elected official may, and always [will,] be held up by petitions of this sort by a losing candidate." [Pena vs House of Representatives Electoral Tribunal, 270 SCRA 340 (1997).] [En Banc, Justice Azcuna, Saquilayan vs Commission on Elections, [G.R. No. 157249. November 28, 2003]

BY R. B. VERA

FPJ leads in Ibon survey; Loren overtakes Noli

From page A1

by the Ibon Foundation Inc. from March 28 to April 4 showed that actor Fernando Poe Jr. got 26.30 percent of the total possible votes, down from the 30.04 percent he received in the previous poll on Feb. 7-15.

The bigger surprise was in the vice presidential race, with Sen. Loren Legarda overtaking Sen. Noli de Castro, who consistently led in other major surveys.

President Macapagal-Arroyo dislodged Alyansa ng Pag-asa's Raul Roco for second place with 18.6 percent, up from the 16.05 percent in the previous survey.

In another survey conducted by Pulse Asia during the same period, Ms Macapagal enjoyed a slim lead of 1.9 percentage points. Thirty-four percent said they would vote for Ms Macapagal, while 31 percent said they would choose Poe. The survey, which covered 4,800 respondents, had a margin of error of plus or minus 1.4 percent.

In the Ibon survey, Roco slid to third with 11.7 percent, down from 19.39 percent. Sen. Panfilo Lacson remained in the fourth slot with 11.2 percent, although he enjoyed a lift from his previous rating of 7.68 percent. Evangelist Eddie Villanueva of Bangon Pilipinas still ranked last, but his share of votes also rose—from 1.06 percent to 5.2 percent.

With 1,300 respondents, the survey had a margin of error of plus or minus three percent and a confidence level of 95 percent.

The survey also showed administration candidates taking seven of the 12 contested Senate seats, with former Trade Secretary Mar Roxas in the No. 1 spot.

Bad news for FPJ

The survey posed the question: "If elections were held today, whom among the following candidates for president (or senator) would you elect?"

"This is bad news for FPJ," said Ibon research director Antonio Tujan in interpreting the figures at a media briefing yesterday. He noted that the actor's "popularity may still be there but this capital is eroding and not translating into additional votes."

While the President had apparently "done a very good campaign," that of Poe had been "mishandled," Tujan said.

The actor's refusal to engage in debates, for instance, had cast doubts on his capacity to govern, he added. "He also failed to answer the President tit-for-tat."

Tujan clarified that with the survey's margin of error of plus or minus three percent, Poe, standard bearer for the Koalisyon ng Nagkakaisang Pilipino, still came out with a "clear statistical lead of 1.7 percent" over Ms Macapagal. "But this (gap) is rather insignificant and very surmountable considering the size of the undecided voters," he said.

Undecided voters bigger

The number of undecided voters has grown to a point that it is now bigger than any single voting bloc at 27 percent, up from the 25.48 percent earlier recorded.

In a parallel Ibon poll, Ms Macapagal's net satisfaction rating has remained in the negative, but still managed to post an "improvement" from -41.98 percent to -30 percent.

This was brought about by an increase of 5.6 percentage points in the number of Filipinos satisfied with the President's performance, from 19.5 percent to 25.2 percent. The number of the dissatisfied dipped from 61.5 percent to 55.8 percent.

Tujan shared the view of other political analysts that the President would win unless the Poe and Lacson camps join forces and field a "unity candidate."

But he said the pressure to slide down was more on Lacson. "It's safe to say that it will be a two-way fight and the people have to be content with a two-way fight. If Ping continues to campaign, he will assure GMA's victory."

Legarda tops De Castro

Among the vice presidential contenders, the KNP-backed Legarda got the nod of 34.5 percent of the respondents, improving her rating by 3.7 percentage points from 30.8 percent in the February survey.

She thus grabbed the lead from the administration candidate De Castro, who fell by 6.6 percentage points, from 37.41 percent to 30.8 percent.

Still at the bottom, Herminio Aquino of Alyansa got 2.2 percent, up from 1.75 percent.

From 30.03 percent, the number of respondents undecided on their choice of vice president rose to 32.5 percent.

In the senatorial contest, the following made it to the top dozen, ranked from No. 1 to 12:

Roxas (K4), Aquilino Pimentel Jr. (KNP), Juan Ponce Enrile (KNP), Alfredo Lim (KNP), Robert Barbers (K4), Mirriam Defensor-Santiago (K4), Ernesto Maceda (KNP), Bong Revilla (K4), Richard Gordon (K4), Rodolfo Biazon (K4), Pia Cayetano (K4), and Boots Anson-Roa (KNP).

The 13th to 15th spots were all taken by KNP candidates Jamby Madrigal, Jinggoy Estrada, and Francisco Tatad.

The 16th to 24th placers were Ernesto Herrera, John Osmeña, Lito Lapid, Orly Mercado, Robert Jaworski, Amina Rasul, Salvador Escudero III, Jay Sonza, Didagen Dilangalen, and Frank Chavez.

Bro. Eddie's 3-million believers start house-to-house, malls, buses campaign

From page A1

va rally showed that his supporters filled up only the grand stand to the Roxas Boulevard area, which has a combined land area of 122,672 sq. meters. Based on the least dense estimate of 2.27 per sq. m. and most dense estimate of 8 persons per sq. m., the crowd could be as low as 278,465 or as high as 981,372, according to the PDI Research)

Second phase

Dong Cucio, Bangon Pilipinas campaign operations manager, said the operation was the second phase of Bangon Pilipinas' campaign strategy, which relies mainly on its human resources.

The party put up Josiah's Army late last year, enlisting millions of card-bearing members to campaign for Villanueva by convincing seven other people, particularly their relatives, to vote for Villanueva.

Operation Red Sea is the extension of such personal campaign strategy, mobilizing the same supporters to go into their communities to "introduce" Villanueva as a candidate worthy of their votes, Cucio said.

The group is seeing "60 percent to 100 percent conversion of votes" because once they know Villanueva they will realize that there is one candidate who is worthy of votes, Cucio said.

He said that Operation Red Sea was making considerable impact in the Ilocos, Cagayan, Central Luzon and Southern Tagalog. There is also good feedback in Metro Manila.

"We are not thinking of surveys now but of votes. We want to swing votes and we believe we have enough time to do that. We can already see the results," Cucio told the INQUIRER in a phone interview yesterday.

The group has so far covered about 50 percent of households in the country.

The supporters knock on doors, distribute brochures and posters of Villanueva to the household members, and explain to them the situation of the country and how Villanueva proposes to solve them through his platform of government.

Those who ride jeeps or buses, on the other hand, start a conversation with their seat mates. When introducing Villanueva, they usually open with "Let us not judge someone we do not know yet." Later, they give away stickers to the drivers of the commuter vehicles.

Bangon Pilipinas officials have declared that with the strategy, they expect to easily get seven million votes for Villanueva, which should be enough to clinch the presidency in the five-person presidential race.

Villanueva is still lagging in the presidential surveys with only 3 to 5 percent of the votes. His supporters are banking on the big number of voters who are undecided and those who have said that they could still change their mind before May 10.

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Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 1666, Series of 2004. See the "Charge & Drive" flyers for details.

'Filipinos have bad teeth, some share 1 toothbrush'

From page A1

Nine out of 10 Filipinos have cavities or dental caries, the leading health problem among public school children in the country, according to the Philippine Dental Association.

Citing a 1998 study of the Filipinos' oral health condition, PDA president Arsenio Donesa said that 92.4 percent of Filipinos have dental caries. The condition has not improved, and apparently still persists, like a case of halitosis.

The National Monitoring and Evaluation Dental Survey conducted by the Department of Health in 1998 showed that "dental caries is probably the most prominent disease affecting Filipinos."

One toothbrush

Marilou Alcazar Maligaya, PDA secretary to the president, said Filipinos have a problem with oral hygiene. She quoted the same 1998 DOH study and revealed that some Filipino family members share one toothbrush, while some families do not even own a toothbrush.

In a forum in Quezon City Tuesday, Maligaya said Filipinos generally dread going to the dentist because of their fear of pain and needles. Many skip their visits until their faces are swollen.

Filipinos should visit the dentist at least twice a year; heavy smokers should go more often, the PDA said. Kids as young as two-and-a-half years old should be brought to the dentist for check-ups and not just for tooth extraction. This would diminish their fear of dentists.

Warning vs dental technician

Donesa, however, warned against consulting dental technicians who offer advice on much lower rates. He said this practice is rampant and poses a problem to patients and licensed dentists.

At present, there is no law which sanctions offenders and illegal dental practitioners in the country. The PDA apprehends and imposes a P5,000 fine on dental technicians who do a dentist's job.

The abolition of the Bureau of Dental Health Services during former president Joseph Estrada's term did not help matters and encouraged more violators.

Maligaya said that dental caries, while not serious in itself, could transport bacteria from the cavities to the heart and cause rheumatic fever. Bacteria can also travel to the brain, kidneys and liver and cause abscess.

Gargle at least

The experts stressed the importance of brushing after meals and flossing. Those who do not have time to brush should at least gargle water.

Donesa advised people to eat more green, leafy vegetables and foods that require more chewing to exercise the jaws and supporting tissues of the teeth. Foods rich in carbohydrates should be reduced because carbos produce acids that attack the teeth. *With Cyril L. Bonabente*

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LARGELY invisible during this political season, Mr.Mike Arroyo is on the campaign trail himself. He was at the SM Trade Hall in Cebu City last week with Senate bet Pia Cayetano to launch the Central Visayas cooperative. PDI PHOTO

Comelec finally releases voters list

By Blanche S. Rivera

AFTER A STORM of criticisms, the Commission on Elections yesterday finally released the much-awaited certified voters list (CVL), less than three weeks before elections.

And it also urgently signed a negotiated contract for the supply of indelible ink to be used in the voting.

But the Comelec action failed to calm the storm.

The private watchdog National Movement for Free Elections (Namfrel) immediately said it had detected gross inaccuracies in the voters' data released by Comelec.

It said the errors included wrong birth dates, ages and precinct assignments—which Namfrel secretary general Guillermo Luz said would surely cause confusion when some 43 million voters cast their ballots on May 10.

After boasting of its modernization program, all the Comelec did was actually "mess up" the voters list, Luz told reporters.

He branded the Comelec's validation project as a "P1-billion screw up" that started with Comelec Commissioner Luzviminda Tancangco.

Warnings of poll frauds

Delay in the release of the voters list had also spurred warnings from opposition parties against possible massive frauds during the elections.

Comelec Commissioner Resurreccion Borra tried to appease critics, saying that the Comelec was already fixing the problem of inaccuracies in voters data.

Indelible ink contract

He said that there was "a little delay" because the Comelec had been verifying the old CVL and working to reconcile it with the new registration records.

The Comelec also signed a P13.5-million negotiated contract with the Pasig-based Texas Resources Corp. for the supply of indelible ink.

Under the deal, the company will supply 500,000 15-milliliter bottles of the ink.

The company is supposed to deliver 70 percent of the ink on April 24 and the rest by the end of the month.

Ali, Lanao political kingpin, dies at 95

From page A1

dent Ferdinand Marcos and head of one of the country's political dynasties, is dead.

Although sometimes referred to by his opponents as a warlord, he was also called "a good man" by some of his enemies.

The Lanao political kingpin died of complications brought on by pneumonia between 3 and 4 a.m. yesterday at the Philippine Heart Center in Manila.

He was 95.

His son, Rep. Abdullah "Bobby" Dimaporo of the second district of Lanao del Norte, said his father had suffered breathing problems complicated by old age.

Ali's wife, Hadja Jamila Dimakuta Dimaporo, his daughters, a son-in-law and nieces were with him when he died, according to the younger Dimaporo, who is running for re-election as representative of the second district of Lanao del Norte.

Bobby Dimaporo's wife, Imelda Quibranza Dimaporo, is running for re-election as governor of Lanao del Norte.

The younger Dimaporo interrupted his campaign to meet the remains of his father at the Cagayan de Oro's Lumbia airport at noon yesterday.

The body was scheduled to be buried later in the day at Ali Dimaporo's birthplace in Binidayan, Lanao del Sur.

All in Allah's hands

"It saddens me my father has to pass away now," Bobby Dimaporo told the INQUIRER on the phone. "How I wish we could've done something to lengthen his life and enjoy his company longer."

"But like all things, only time and God can tell when we will go."

The elder Dimaporo served as a congressman of Lanao del Norte for three terms. He was also a former governor of Lanao del Sur and Lanao del Norte provinces, and was president of the Mindanao State University System for 10 years from 1976.

Lawyer Angel Superable, a candidate for councilor in Iligan city, recalled the elder Dimaporo as formerly a political enemy of former Gov. Arsenio Quibranza.

But they later became close friends.

Arch enemies, then friends

Said Superable: "Before, when I was board member under former Gov. Arsenio Quibranza, he (Dimaporo) was our arch enemy because of the Christian and Muslim conflict. He was very close to the Marcoses that he could enter through the kitchen of Malacañang."

"I'm thankful because the two arch enemies (Dimaporo and Quibranza) became close friends to solve the conflict."

"He had done so much. When he became president of the MSU System, he helped many Christians who wanted to study there. And he also helped MSU-IIT (Iligan Institute of technology) by giving financial support," Superable added.

Born on June 15, 1918, in Binidayan, Lanao, Mohammad Ali B. Dimaporo was the eldest among the four children of Datu Dimaporo Mamalapat and Potri-Maamor Burngao.

Provincial gov't chair

He was a lone representative of the then undivided Lanao from 1949-1953 and from 1953-1957. He ran for re-election in 1957 but lost.

When Lanao was divided into two provinces in 1959, he was elected Lanao del Norte governor. He was re-elected in 1963 and later won a congressional seat, which he held until 1973.

In 1976, with the country under martial law, Marcos appointed him governor of Lanao del Sur and he held the position until 1986.

When Marcos established in March 1977 a 13-province provisional government of southern Philippines, Dimaporo was appointed chair.

Creation of the provisional government had been called for under the Tripoli Agreement on ending the Muslim separatist conflict.

Golfer

Dimaporo was also a sportsman. He was a member of several golf clubs, including the Wack-Wack Golf and Country Club. He was president of Sepak Takraw Association and Philippine Olympic Committee in 1980.

Dimaporo had an Associate in Arts degree (1941) from the University of the Philippines, where he also took up a law degree, which he was not able to finish. *With a report from Aisha Echavez, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

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Viet ambassador summoned to explain Spratlys tour

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All the claimants, except for Brunei, have military personnel stationed in the archipelago of more than 100 islets, reefs and atolls.

In the past, squabbling over the islands has erupted into violence. The most serious incident occurred in 1988 when Chinese and Vietnamese naval forces clashed at Johnson Reef, leaving 78 Vietnamese Navy personnel dead.

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Heidemann said the invitation to the Vietnamese envoy was part of a consensus among Southeast Asian nations to keep the status quo on the Spratlys and avoid heightening tensions.

She said the Philippine government "is concerned" with the latest development, because it was among the countries that pushed for the code of conduct governing the Spratlys signed by all claimants in 2002. *AFP*

Tugboat crew safe

KUALA LUMPUR—Three crew members of a tugboat who were abducted over a week ago are safe and in the Tawi-Tawi chain of islands in southern Philippines, a senior military officer was reported on Wednesday as saying.

"This is according to our intelligence," Fifth Brigade commanding officer Mohd Shahrin Abdul Majid told The Star newspaper. *Reuters*

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? What position will population management and human development take in your local development program?

These are among the burning issues Iloilo politicians will address as they meet with business leaders and community influentials at the—

Business-and-Politics Convergence in Population and Development

CAP Auditorium,
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Hosted by the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Iloilo, Inc. (CCIII) under the auspices of the Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry (PCCI)

The business and political meeting is one of a series of forums between local political parties and business leaders on the issues of population growth and family planning, and how these affect local and national development, the economy, and the welfare of the Filipino citizenry.

Majority of Filipino voters are in favor of family planning. And they would rather vote for candidates who support family planning. That's what the surveys say.

Big business groups also want population management and family planning. They know that a population too big and growing too fast hurts the economy and affects the quality of our human resources.

At the Convergence forum in Iloilo, representatives of the contending political parties and some 300 business leaders from the area will come together to discuss what must be done, what can be done, and what they intend to do to address pressing population-and-development concerns in Iloilo from a regional development perspective. These concerns include:

- Migration and urbanization
- How population affects business and regional development
- Family planning in the workplace
- Role of government and the private sector in population management.

Business: Emerging Ally of Population Management and Family Planning

Of late, the business sector has been emerging as a strong ally of population development and family planning. This is the reason the PCCI is spearheading the forums in three locations all over the country.

Business groups have realized that the country's population growth is holding back the growth of the country's economy, undermining the very resources that fuel the nation's advancement, and is nullifying all the efforts that the business community is taking to push the country ahead.

Unless the Philippines can make its GDP grow 7-8 percent – like its Asian neighbors – the country will find it next to impossible to address problems like urban congestion, rapid in-migration, inadequate basic services, unskilled labor force and poverty. What the Philippines has is an economy that is not going fast enough to provide for the needs of its very fast-growing population.

Iloilo: Committed to Business and Development

Located in the center of the Philippine archipelago, Iloilo City is the gateway to the flourishing region of Western Visayas. It is a city committed to the promotion of business and regional growth.

Agriculture is still the principal industry, but Iloilo also has one of the richest fishing grounds in the country. With an eye for both the domestic and export markets, Iloilo is keenly pursuing goals of economic excellence, preservation and enrichment of its natural wealth, and the advancement of the health and welfare of its people.

Faced with the challenges of increasing urbanization and rising competition in the global trade arena, Iloilo is beginning to feel the weight that a fast-growing population bears upon its environmental resources and the pursuit of its social and economic goals.

The Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Iloilo, Inc. (CCIII) is lending a hand in support of population management efforts in the region.

For Inquiries, contact:

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The population clock is ticking...

Viet ambassador summoned to explain Spratlys tour

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Iloilo City, center of growth, prepares to face the challenge of a growing urban population

? How will you address the growing urbanization of Iloilo?
? How will you support the gains of the city's economy in the face of its growing population?
? What position will population management and human development take in your local development program?

These are among the burning issues Iloilo politicians will address as they meet with business leaders and community influentials at the—

Business-and-Politics Convergence in Population and Development

CAP Auditorium,
General Luna St., Iloilo City
April 22, 2004

Hosted by the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Iloilo, Inc. (CCIII) under the auspices of the Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry (PCCI)

The business and political meeting is one of a series of forums between local political parties and business leaders on the issues of population growth and family planning, and how these affect local and national development, the economy, and the welfare of the Filipino citizenry.

Majority of Filipino voters are in favor of family planning. And they would rather vote for candidates who support family planning. That's what the surveys say.

Big business groups also want population management and family planning. They know that a population too big and growing too fast hurts the economy and affects the quality of our human resources.

At the Convergence forum in Iloilo, representatives of the contending political parties and some 300 business leaders from the area will come together to discuss what must be done, what can be done, and what they intend to do to address pressing population-and-development concerns in Iloilo from a regional development perspective. These concerns include:

- Migration and urbanization
- How population affects business and regional development
- Family planning in the workplace
- Role of government and the private sector in population management.

Business: Emerging Ally of Population Management and Family Planning

Of late, the business sector has been emerging as a strong ally of population development and family planning. This is the reason the PCCI is spearheading the forums in three locations all over the country.

Business groups have realized that the country's population growth is holding back the growth of the country's economy, undermining the very resources that fuel the nation's advancement, and is nullifying all the efforts that the business community is taking to push the country ahead.

Unless the Philippines can make its GDP grow 7-8 percent - like its Asian neighbors - the country will find it next to impossible to address problems like urban congestion, rapid in-migration, inadequate basic services, unskilled labor force and poverty. What the Philippines has is an economy that is not going fast enough to provide for the needs of its very fast-growing population.

Iloilo: Committed to Business and Development

Located in the center of the Philippine archipelago, Iloilo City is the gateway to the flourishing region of Western Visayes. It is a city committed to the promotion of business and regional growth.

Agriculture is still the principal industry, but Iloilo also has one of the richest fishing grounds in the country. With an eye for both the domestic and export markets, Iloilo is keenly pursuing goals of economic excellence, preservation and enrichment of its natural wealth, and the advancement of the health and welfare of its people.

Faced with the challenges of increasing urbanization and rising competition in the global trade arena, Iloilo is beginning to feel the weight that a fast-growing population bears upon its environmental resources and the pursuit of its social and economic goals.

The Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Iloilo, Inc. (CCIII) is lending a hand in support of population management efforts in the region.

For Inquiries, contact:

CCIII Secretariat

Tel. no. (033) 5099944 (Cherry or Milfranz) or (033) 3291971 local 1094 (Mary or Rose)

Fax: (033) 3370543/
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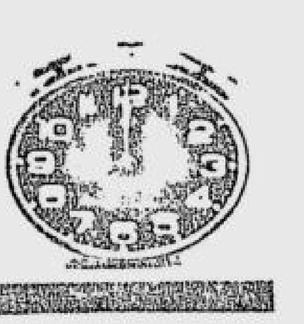
mary_o_p@hotmail.com

The population clock is ticking...



CONFETTI rains on presidential candidate Lacson during a campaign motorcade on Wednesday along in Cotabato City.

EDWIN BACASMAS

STARRING FPJ: Movie posters of the big screen's action king plasters a wall at Poe's movie studio in Manila.

REUTERS

PROGRAM for a cleaner environment and economic development is launched by President Macapagal at the Dona Leonila Park in San Pablo City. Here she pours coco bio-diesel additives for cleaner fuel.

VAL HANDUMON

More candidates getting sick down the homestretch

By Christine O. Avendaño,
Juliet Labog-Javellana
and Michael Lim Ubac

CALAPAN CITY—With the election campaign now going into the homestretch, opposition presidential candidate Fernando Poe Jr. yesterday found himself in the company of other presidential candidates in sick bay.

Poe was forced to skip his one-day campaign sortie in Oriental Mindoro after suffering a sore throat and a slight fever, said his personal campaign manager Sen. Vicente Sotto.

Sotto told reporters that Poe had been advised by his doctors to take a full day's rest.

The senator said he expected Poe to be "up and about" today and go to Batangas to campaign as the province was "FPJ country" and the opposition considered the province to be "very critical" to them.

Sen. Panfilo Lacson had to skip a scheduled campaign sortie in General Santos City the other day because of a slight fever.

Last week, Alyansa ng Pag-asa presidential bet Raul Roco took a break from the campaign and left for the United States to undergo some medical tests after complaining of lower back pains.

While her rivals seem to be getting sick from the rigors of campaigning, President Macapagal-Arroyo is bothered only by a hoarseness in her voice.

Thanks to her disciplined health regimen, the 57-year-old grandmother has no problem juggling a punishing schedule.

"I don't drink cold water, only tepid water. And I take Pei Pa Koa," Ms Macapagal said on Tuesday night when she treated Palace reporters to a belated birthday dinner at the Malacañang State Dining Room.

The President takes Pei Pa Koa, a traditional Chinese herbal cough syrup that is known to be effective against sore throat, whenever her voice becomes hoarse from delivering so many campaign speeches.

"My voice is not nice anyway. My natural voice is grating so it's the same," said a laughing Ms Macapagal.

She refrains from making "small talk" on the campaign trail to conserve her voice, "unless it's a social function [like this]," she said.

"It's important that you're disciplined in everything, including [taking care of your] body," said the President who revealed that the secret to her good health was lots of vitamins, enough sleep and 15-minute naps, balanced diet and exercise.

Ms Macapagal does regular aerobics and plays golf when her schedule permits.

The President, however, would not be baited into commenting on the candidacy of Raul Roco beyond her standard reply that she was praying for his recovery.

Roco's spokesperson Jaime Galvez-Tan yesterday announced that Roco will be going through his last and final diagnostic tests today before his doctors in the United States can give him a clean bill of health.

Tan said Roco will return to Manila on April 28 as earlier announced.

"He will return to resume the fight," said Galvez-Tan, reiterating that Roco's vigor continued to improve everyday, and he "is raring to go home."

GMA political rivals plan Edsa rally to protest her misuse of funds, power

From page A1

groups, student and youth sectors and religious groups.

Among the civil society and party-list groups were Bayan Muna, Anakbayan, Anakpawis, Gabriela and Migrante.

Poe aides back protest

The country has witnessed three "People Power" protests at Edsa during the past 18 years.

The first, in 1986, brought down Ferdinand Marcos, the second toppled Estrada, while the third, in 2001, sparked a futile attack on the presidential palace by Estrada's supporters to denounce his arrest.

Lawyer Ed Araullo, spokesperson of Kilos para sa Bagong Umaga and Pinoy si FPJ Campaign to Save Democracy, and Lito Anzures of Poe's media team, supported the planned protest. Both were guests at the forum.

Araullo and Anzures said they would convince Poe to attend the rally to prove that he also condemned the supposed illegal use of taxpayers' money to bankroll Ms Macapagal's candidacy.

"We should have a rally to oppose her use of public funds," said Araullo.

Lacson's campaign handlers could not be immediately reached for comment.

Luis Sison, spokesperson for Villanueva's Bangon Pilipinas, said the group had not received any formal invitation to take part in the protest but that its members would not hesitate to take to the streets.

"Of course, we will join them," Sison told the INQUIRER. "We also denounce this spending of public funds for the campaign."

Tan said the "unity of parties" through a tactical alliance among Roco, Poe, Lacson and Villanueva was aimed at preventing Ms Macapagal from further using public funds and other resources—including the police and military—to win a six-year mandate.

Possible backfire

Told that such a concerted move might backfire and actually work for the President, who would be perceived as the candidate to beat, Galvez-Tan said: "It's a natural consequence for (opposition) parties to get together. Since she is in power, admittedly she is in a position of strength."

The difference, he said, was in the use of the presidential power.

Galvez-Tan said: "Because the country's economy is in ruins, any abusive use of power is illegal, and that we will oppose."

'End to evil deeds'

"There is an end to all anomalies and evil deeds," added Galvez-Tan, accusing the President of committing fraud for using the road users' tax, Philhealth and government charity funds for campaign purposes.

He said "there is nothing definite at the moment" on the results of unity talks between him and leaders of Villanueva's Bangon Pilipinas.

"Suffice it to say that the talks are very cordial, open, no trace of any animosity, and they are proceeding very well."

He reiterated that both camps were not talking about who will slide down to the No. 2 slot.

Told that Villanueva's position to pursue the presidency was non-negotiable, Galvez-Tan said: "Roco's candidacy is also non-negotiable."

Alyansa ng Pag-Asa and Bangon Pilipinas are also looking into the possibility of combining their resources for poll watching and Bangon's adoption of the Alyansa's seven senatorial candidates.

FVR tells FPJ: Slide down for Lacson

From page A1

head of the opposition, is binding Lacson to a promise he supposedly made last year to bow out of the presidential race should he fail to get wide support in the run-up to the May elections.

In an interview in Camp Capinpin, Tanay, Rizal, Estrada insisted that it was Lacson, and not the standard-bearer of the Koalisyon ng Nagkakaisang Pilipino, who should sacrifice his candidacy.

"Can No. 1 give up for No. 4?" he said of Lacson, who is tailing President Macapagal-Arroyo, Poe, and Raul Roco in the surveys. Poe used to lead the pack, but Ms Macapagal has overtaken him.

"In our talk last year, Ping promised to back out and run as senator," Estrada said. He was replying to the question of what would happen to Sen. Loren Legarda, who is running for vice president under the KNP, should talks between Poe and Lacson result in the latter sliding down to vice president.

Their lookout

Asked what would happen if the unification talks between Poe and Lacson fizzled out, Estrada said: "Well, that's their own lookout."

But he said he was optimistic that the two men would unite to ensure the opposition's victory.

"I remain confident because I believe that they are not only mature but [also] intelligent. They know that their common objective is to remove an incumbent President. It's the only way to win," he said.

But "if they don't unify," Estrada said, "I think FPJ has an edge over Ping." He said Poe's victory would not be tied to a unification with Lacson.

Estrada also predicted that Poe would win the elections.

"The presidency is destiny," he said, citing his own experience.

Similar situation

Ramos cited a "similar situation" in 1992 when then Senator Estrada was running for the presidency but eventually gave way to businessman Eduardo "Danding" Cojuangco.

He said that even then, Estrada had more experience in local government whereas Cojuangco was a well-known chief executive officer who was "more capable of running the country then."

"Maybe if Poe gives way, he can negotiate for a clear role as president in the 2010 elections," Ramos said, adding that the opposition had "a short time" to organize and unify with less than three weeks to election day.

"Time is running [out]," he said. "I do not understand why the two principals cannot get together. The best way to beat the incumbent would be to unite."

Ramos also said Poe should give way despite the perception that he was more "popular and winnable" than Lacson.

"I started very low in terms of 'winnability,'" he said, referring to his own candidacy bid in the 1992 elections.

According to Ramos, the Laban ng Demokratikong Pilipino, his original party, dumped him in December 1991 because "I was not winnable for them." He said he had to form his own party, Lakas.

Rep. Francis Escudero, spokesperson for Poe, said Lacson should "forego his personal ambition for the national good."

'Do a Doy'

"For the good to triumph, Ping must do a Doy," Escudero said in a KNP news release, referring to the 1986 "snap" election when Salvador "Doy" Laurel agreed to slide down as running mate of Corazon Aquino against the strongman Ferdinand Marcos.

"[The year] 1986 gave us the template on how to defeat an incumbent—that the opposition must rally behind one bet because many challengers will just divide the votes," Escudero said.

But he stressed that even with Lacson in the race, "Poe would win, and win convincingly."

But Ramos pointed out that the opposition's moves were "far-fetched" because Ms Macapagal would "win the elections fairly based on performance and potential."

'Far-fetched'

Ramos, who is preparing to embark on a six-day trip to China for an international forum, said he would resume campaigning for Ms Macapagal upon his return on April 28.

"I am campaigning for President Macapagal-Arroyo and the entire K-4 ticket from top national to bottom local," he declared.

Ramos also denied reports in other newspapers that more Lakas members would bolt the ruling coalition.

"That's an old report," he said. "What's relevant and recent is many of those who left Lakas for another party are now coming back to the fold."

'Super-egos' blocking opposition unity

From page A1

nouncing that he was trashing former President Joseph Estrada's call for him to slide down to unite the opposition. (*See story on Page A1.*)

"That is [his] prerogative but it doesn't mean I should heed his call. We're in the thick of the campaign and I intend to go through this exercise," Lacson told some 4,000 supporters during a rally at the Cotabato City Polytechnic College.

He said he harbored no ill feeling toward the ex-President: "Mr. Estrada's decision to side with Poe has been obvious [from the start]. It is his personal position and it will be like that. I respect his position because he is very consistent, unlike others."

Pooling resources

If the opposition cannot come up with a common standard-bearer, then parties fielding candidates against the administration's K-4 slate can at least pool their resources to ensure that cheating will not take place, Lacson said.

"We can go together on sorties to announce how to thwart cheating and make an accounting of our resources. We can do a lot because there's a common front against cheating," he said.

Lacson returned to the campaign trail to firm up his chances in Central Mindanao after a bad cold Tuesday that had him calling off a campaign sortie in General Santos City.

During his trip here yesterday, Lacson debunked claims by Malacañang that Maguindanao was "GMA country."

Hundreds of people lined the road from the Cotabato Airport in Awang, Datu Odin Sinsuat, in Maguindanao to the downtown area, where Lacson, his senatorial candidate Carlos Padilla, and other candidates held a motorcade.

A streamer put up by relatives of President Macapagal-Arroyo drew a wide smile from the senator. It read: "Macapagal clan supports Ping Lacson."

Pete Macapagal, who marched with Lacson on the highway, said: "What we need is a strong leader with a word of honor. I don't see it in Gloria."

Pete's family traces its roots in Lubao, Pampanga.

While the other half of the Macapagal clan here is reportedly supporting the President, Pete said their blood ties "do not affect my decision to support Lacson."

Poe camp short on funds

Lacson said he was the practical choice to be the standard-bearer of a united opposition.

"It would be more practical if I become the standard-bearer, with the other camp sliding down. There'd be more winners in that kind of situation," he said.

Lacson noted that "the other camp" was "now short on funds."

"I don't think my sliding down would alleviate their problems in finances," he said.

With only less than three weeks to go before May 10, Lacson said financial support continued to pour in from many members of the Chinese-Filipino community.

He said many of his supporters were small-time contributors whose financial support still added up to a considerable sum.

"As long as there are Chinese-Filipinos, we'll never run out of money," he declared.

Pessimism concerning the prospects of unification has started to pervade Poe's Koalisyon ng Nagkakaisang Pilipino.

'Hopeless case'

"*Wala na ito.* It's a hopeless case," said Maguindanao Rep. Didagen Dilangalen, a KNP senatorial candidate.

Dilangalen is identified as a loyalist of Estrada, who in the last two days has pushed for Poe as opposition standard-bearer.

"It's a pity we are in this situation," Dilangalen said in a phone interview.

Asked to restate his view that unity was a hopeless cause, he said: "*Wala na talaga.*"

Pressed to restate his view for a third time so there won't be claims that he was taken out of context, he said: "*Wala na.*"

"As far as we are concerned, with or without Lacson in the race, FPJ is still ahead of his rivals. Notwithstanding his poor ratings in the survey, Ping Lacson wants to continue."

Dilangalen refused to say who should be blamed for the continuing failure of the two rival opposition camps to unite.

"They [Poe and Lacson] have every right to run," he said. "Both are determined. Both believe they can win."

Still possible

In another phone interview, KNP senatorial candidate Francisco Tatad said unity was still possible in the coming days.

"I haven't reached that point of thinking," he said with a laugh when asked if he thought that the opposition would field both Poe and Lacson as presidential candidates on May 10.

In an interview Monday evening, KNP senatorial candidate Salvador Escudero said Poe and Lacson could still pull off a "surprise."

"Everybody expects them not to unite, but I wouldn't be surprised if there will be unity," he said with a wink. "It is the obligation of the opposition to unite. I'm very confident about this."

Also on Monday evening, Poe conceded to a handful of reporters that unity might come too late if it does not happen before the end of April.

Asked if the opposition could afford to wait until May, he said in Filipino: "Maybe not. It would be too late."

Poe said he himself was getting impatient about the prospects of unification.

KNP candidate Sen. Aquilino Pimentel Jr. said in a mobile phone text message: "We are not counting on unification for FPJ's victory.

"Only Gloria and her cohorts are playing it up as if without it, FPJ can't win. In our opinion, while unification is important, it is not essential."

Not first priority

Even Sen. Vicente Sotto III, Poe's personal campaign manager said yesterday that the unification of the opposition was not the topmost priority.

Instead, Sotto said in Calapan City, the priority of the KNP was to campaign for its candidates.

He said it was his personal view that unification talks between Poe and Lacson would be "good." But he added that if there would be none, the KNP would continue to campaign.

Sotto said Poe would still win the elections. "They can prove me wrong on May 11," he said. *With reports from Carlito Pablo and Christine O. Avendaño*

A Message of Clarification
from
Aboitiz Transport System Corporation (ATSC)

Over the past weeks there have been numerous newspaper articles that have been publishing incorrect information. ATSC has kept silent as most erroneous press reports are best left unanswered. Unfortunately, the allegations continue despite our silence.

To avoid misperceptions becoming truths as they often do, we have little choice but to invest resources that could be better used elsewhere in correcting these erroneous allegations.

On the Ownership of Tsuneishi Heavy Industries

ATSC does not own Tsuneishi Heavy Industries, Inc. It has never owned Tsuneishi Heavy Industries.

ATSC made an official disclosure to the Philippine Stock Exchange and Securities and Exchange Commission last March 26, 2004 in view of the news article published last March 22, 2004 in Manila Times entitled "Nenaco hits seizure of ship by rival Aboitiz".

ATSC clarified that, ABOITIZ & COMPANY, INC. (ACO) owns 20% of Tsuneishi and not ATSC.

ATSC is almost wholly owned by Aboitiz Equity Ventures.

On the Domestic Transport Industry

The domestic transportation industry is composed of three modes of travel: by air, land and sea. It has been deregulated for over a decade. Any company is free to risk its capital for endeavors in air, land or sea.

There are 5 major operators in the air business, 20 major operators for sea including fast crafts, not to mention the small wooden hull ships servicing smaller routes, and 4 major land operators that go all the way to Visayas and Mindanao.

With the introduction of the Nautical Highway offering roll-on-roll-off transport service, more new operators are offering all kinds of different services.

These many options for the domestic travel market and this environment creates a healthy competition among players. All modes of transport compete for the same clientele.

What matters in any industry is the ability of the market to regulate itself and that is best done when both entry and exit are free, when pricing is free and when the customer has various choices. This is the atmosphere in domestic transport today.

Due to the abundance of alternatives to get around the islands, not one operator, has more than 20% of the entire market.

The transport industry is one of the more progressive sectors of our economy, with a 12.8% growth in year 2003. Investments in durable equipment in the water transport industry grew by 78%. *(Source: NEDA index)*

ATSC has had a good working relationship with Nenaco for decades and has only best wishes for Negros Navigation during these apparently difficult times. ATSC is confident that Negros Navigation will find the correct solution to their present difficulties when it eventually finds that their problems don't really lie in either a payable or apparent competitor relationship gone wrong. Neither of these two on their own or together can bring any company to this stage of apparent desperation where a barrage of news articles do nothing but blame someone else for their woes.

Aboitiz has been in the transportation business for almost 100 years. During that period we have competed with all kinds of companies, weathered challenging economic downturns and thrived through good management, prudent fiscal discipline and dedicated service.

PAID ADVERTISEMENT

68 killed in 4 Iraq suicide bombings

BASRA—Suicide bombers killed at least 68 people, many of them children, in coordinated strikes on four police stations that inflicted bloody chaos on Iraq's southern city of Basra on Wednesday, officials said.

Basra mayor Wael Abdul-Hafeez accused Osama bin Laden's al-Qaida network of being behind the morning rush-hour blasts.

Near-simultaneous explosions hit three police stations in Basra and one in the town of Zubair, 25 km south of the mainly Shiite city, the British military said.

"All four attacks seem to have been carried out by suicide bombers," said a British Defense Ministry spokesperson in Basra.

Hafeez told a news conference 68 people, not including the bombers, had been killed and 99 wounded. Many of those killed were children who were going to school in a minibus that was incinerated in one of the car bombings.

Iraq's Coalition Provisional Authority, which in Basra is British-led, vowed to pursue those behind "these despicable attacks."

A wounded Iraqi, Amin Dinar, said he had heard a huge explosion as he stood at the door of his house.

"I looked around and saw my leg bleeding and my neighbor lying dead on the floor, torn apart," he said from his hospital bed.

"I saw a minibus full of children on fire—15 of the 18 passengers were killed and three badly wounded," he added.

The mayor, speaking at Basra police headquarters, said police had recovered the remains of one bearded bomber.

"I accuse al-Qaida," the mayor said. "We have arrested a person disguised in a police uniform. We are questioning him."

US officials have blamed al-Qaida or its affiliates for some of the violence sweeping Iraq.

Witnesses at hospitals said earlier that 200 civilians and police had been wounded. Reuters counted 55 bodies at one hospital.

A morgue attendant said 39 bodies had been identified while at least 16 other bodies were burnt beyond recognition.

A British military spokesperson said there had been three explosions at Basra police stations at about 7:15 a.m. "They were vehicle-based improvised explosive devices," Squadron Leader John Arnold said.

British officials said the Zubair blast killed three Iraqis and wounded four British soldiers, two of them seriously. *Reuters*

Saddam's judges kept a secret for safety

BAGHDAD—Iraq has chosen judges and prosecutors to try Saddam Hussein but their identities are being kept secret for fear the toppled Iraqi leader's supporters will hunt them down.

Salem Chalabi, a US-educated lawyer who is director general of administration for the tribunal set up to prosecute Saddam, said on Wednesday seven investigative judges and five prosecutors would take charge of the case.

"They cannot be named due to security concerns," said Chalabi, who has received death threats from supporters of Saddam, who was captured by US troops on Dec. 13 hiding in a hole near his hometown of Tikrit.

A month later the United States declared him a prisoner of war, angering many Iraqis who feared he would escape the death sentence.

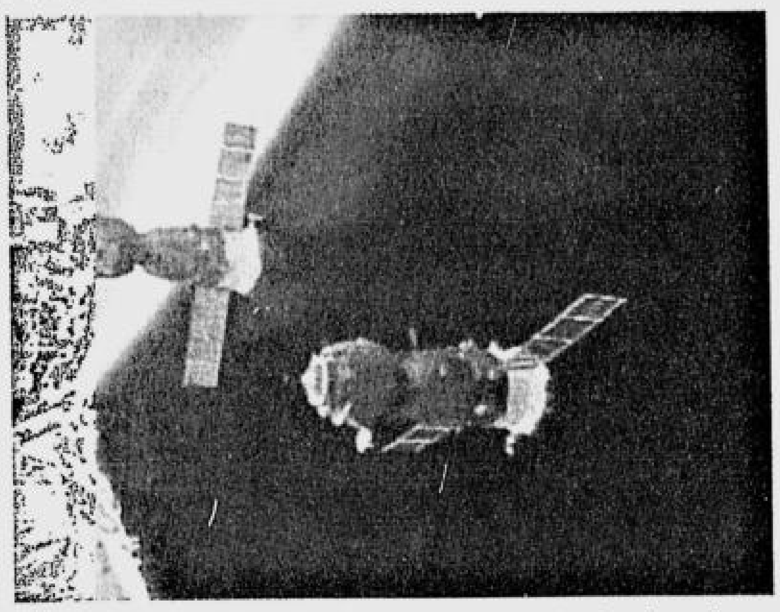
His POW status means the former dictator, accused of torturing and sending thousands of Iraqis to mass graves, could have more rights than a war criminal.

Chalabi has said he believes Saddam's status will be changed to war criminal before his trial begins.

Saddam's planned trial has been overshadowed by a fierce Sunni Muslim insurgency that has unleashed suicide bombings against US occupation troops who also have faced militiamen loyal to a radical Shiite cleric in recent weeks.

Chalabi said he imagined prosecutors would seek the death penalty for Saddam and other members of his Baath party toppled by a US-led invasion a year ago.

But he said it was far too early to predict when Saddam, also accused of ordering chemical attacks on Kurds, would sit in the dock. *Reuters*



A TELEVISION camera on the International Space Station shows the Soyuz vehicle with the Expedition 9 crew aboard as it prepares to dock in this view from television, April 21. A Soyuz vehicle which carried the Expedition 8 crew to the station is visible at the left of the frame. AP

Soyuz spacecraft docks with int'l space station

KOROLYOV, Russia—A Russian spacecraft carrying a Russian-US-Dutch crew docked smoothly with the international space station on Wednesday, as US and Russian space officials on the ground squabbled over the conditions for future missions.

The Soyuz TMA-4, working on autopilot, docked three minutes ahead of schedule at 9:01 (0501 GMT), approximately two days after blasting off on a rocket from Russia's Baikonur cosmodrome in Kazakhstan. Carrying three astronauts, it was the third Russian spacecraft to fill in for the US space shuttle, which has been suspended since the Columbia disaster.

Russian commander Gennady Padalka and American flight engineer Michael Fincke's mission will be to maintain the orbital outpost, whose assembly has been on hold since the February 2003 disaster. Andre Kuipers of the Netherlands is going on a nine-day mission to conduct experiments for the European Space Agency.

Flight engineers monitoring the docking at Russian Mission Control in Korolyov, outside Moscow, broke into applause as a camera affixed to the spacecraft showed the successful docking.

"I would like to thank the Russian space Agency for again providing an excellent launch, an excellent ride and an excellent docking as we continue this great friendship and journey together. We appreciate everything that has been done," Fred Gregory, deputy administrator of the US space agency Nasa, said after the spacecraft had reached the station. *AP*

UN wants Suu Kyi released

GENEVA—The UN's top human rights forum on Wednesday unanimously called on Burma's (also called Myanmar) military junta to release pro-democracy icon Aung San Suu Kyi and other opposition leaders.

The call was made in a resolution brought by the European Union, which was adopted by the 53 countries in the United Nations Commission on Human Rights without a vote.

The decision came amid mounting speculation in recent weeks that Aung San Suu Kyi, who was taken into detention during political unrest a year ago, will be freed before a national convention opens on May 17.

The resolution "strongly urges the government of Burma to restore democracy and respect the results of the 1990 elections by... releasing immediately and unconditionally the leadership of the National League for Democracy (NLD), including Aung San Suu Kyi."

While praising recent political developments including the seven-step roadmap to civilian rule in the country, the text also urged the government "to end the systematic violations of human rights in the country."

Some Asian and western countries also put pressure on Burma to come up with a concrete timeframe for the transition process the military has pledged to set up from next month.

"The Burmese government should also articulate a timetable leading to the establishment of democracy in Burma," United States ambassador Richard William-son told the commission. *AFP*

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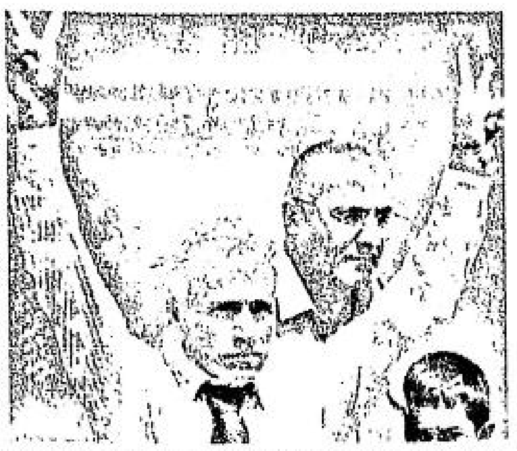
Government Warning: Cigarette sm



VANUNU flashes the V-sign for victory as he walks free out of the high security prison of Shikma in Askelon, southern Israel. AFP

Israel's nuke whistle-blower walks free

SHIKMA PRISON—Israel's nuclear whistleblower Mordechai Vanunu walked free after 18 years in prison Wednesday, insisting he was proud at what he had done but denying he had more secrets to reveal.

"I am proud and happy that I did what I did," Vanunu told reporters as he walked free from Shikma prison in southern Israel shortly after 11 a.m.

Vanunu said his treatment in prison was "cruel and barbaric" and insisted he had "no more secrets" to reveal.

The one-time technician at the Dimona nuclear plant in southern Israel was abducted by secret service agents in Italy, smuggled back to Israel and then jailed back in 1986 after leaking details of the plant to Britain's Sunday Times newspaper.

Hundreds of foreign supporters of Vanunu gathered outside the prison to give him a hero's welcome although he is still widely perceived as a traitor by the Israeli public.

The supporters released doves into the air ahead of his release and then showered his car with petals as he was driven away from the prison gates.

Opponents however carried banners with slogans such as: "Death to the spy, Death to Vanunu."

Vanunu will now be subject to a series of sweeping restrictions, including a ban on traveling abroad or associating with foreigners without prior approval from the Israeli authorities.

However he said in an impromptu press conference outside the prison that he wanted to travel to both the United States and Britain. *AFP*

Sharon vows to continue killing militants

JERUSALEM—Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon pledged to continue targeting militant Palestinian leaders as four Palestinians were killed in a clash with soldiers in northern Gaza that resulted from a weekend assassination.

Sharon was speaking Tuesday in the seaside city of Ashdod, where a March 14 suicide bombing set off Israel's campaign against the leaders of Hamas. On March 24, Israel killed the founder of Hamas, Sheik Ahmed Yassin, and on Saturday, an Israeli missile strike killed his successor, Abdel Aziz Rantissi.

Hamas threatened "100 unique reprisals," and militants stepped up rocket attacks on Jewish settlements in Gaza, provoking an Israeli raid on northern Gaza to try to stop the salvo. Palestinians, including gunmen, confronted the soldiers, who shot four dead and wounded at least 33 Tuesday.

Early Wednesday, Israeli troops and tanks moved into Beit Lahiya, a town in northern Gaza, and surrounded a housing project, residents said. No clashes or casualties were reported.

Despite the threat, Sharon said Israel would keep up its assault.

"We will fight terror and we will not let up on them—in that way we got rid of the first murderer, and in that way a few days ago we got rid of the second murderer, and that is not the end," Sharon said in a reference to Yassin and Rantissi.

The violence came as Defense Minister Shaul Mofaz visited an Israeli army position in Gaza, promoting Sharon's "unilateral disengagement" plan, which includes a pullout from the territory.

Sharon's Likud Party is to vote in a referendum on the plan on May 2.

Though Sharon and the Likud were in the forefront of settlement building for decades, and the "disengagement" plan calls for dismantling settlements in the West Bank and Gaza for the first time, Likud leaders are lining up behind it, and the rank and file are expected to vote in favor.

Talking to troops at a post on the Gaza-Egypt border, scene of almost daily clashes as the military searches for arms smuggling tunnels, Mofaz said the pullout would reduce friction with the Palestinians.

Even after the withdrawal, he said, the Israeli military "can act freely, while remaining in the area around the Gaza Strip."

Israel has said it would reserve the right to attack militants in Gaza even after its withdrawal.

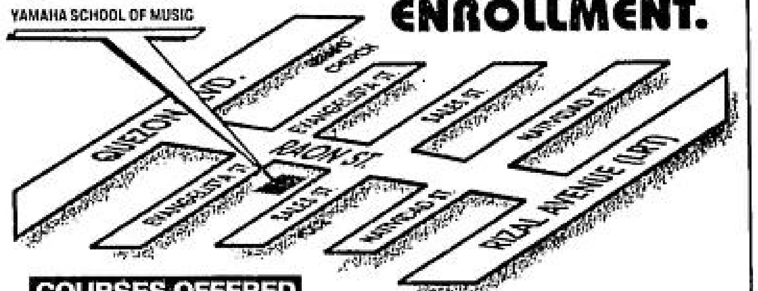
The clash in northern Gaza appeared to foreshadow the type of sequence Mofaz meant —Israeli forces entering Gaza to stop Palestinian rocket fire.

The barrage of homemade rockets —15 over two days—was one of the largest in months. The Qassam rockets, not much more than hollow tubes with fuel and small explosive warheads, exploded in two blocs of Israeli settlements, wounding one Israeli and damaging five structures.

Then Israeli tanks rumbled into a buffer zone between the settlement of Nissanit in northern Gaza and Beit Lahiya. The military said some of the rockets were launched from there.

Hundreds of Palestinians pelted the tanks with rocks and firebombs, and then gunmen joined in. Taking cover behind a mound of sand, they exchanged fire with soldiers on a nearby hill.

Soldiers killed four Palestinians, including at least two gunmen, hospital officials said. A 17-year-old was shot dead as he climbed on a tank, the military said. At least 33 Palestinians were wounded, six critically, hospital officials said. Four soldiers were slightly wounded, the military said. *AP*



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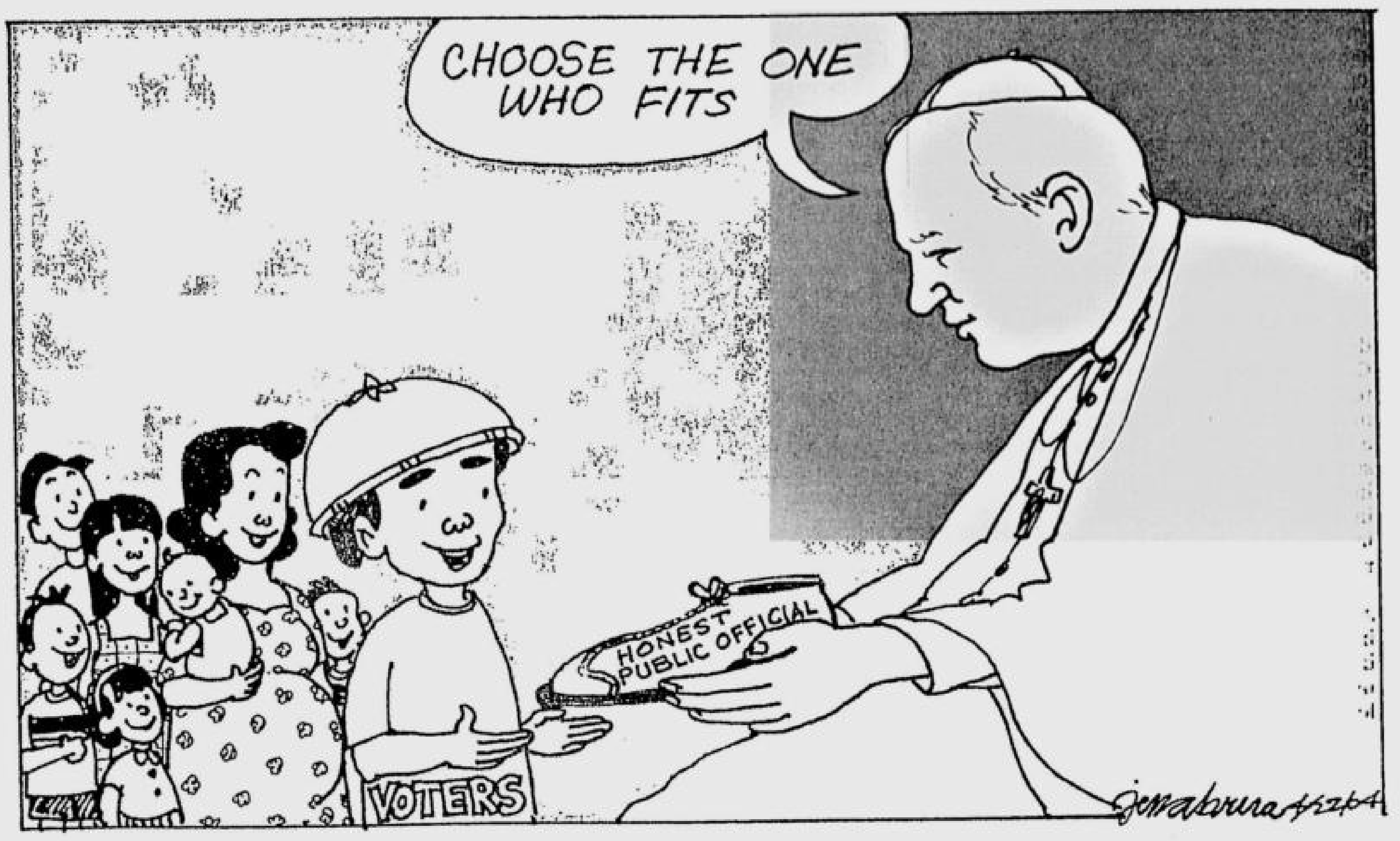

Birthday boy

EDITORIAL

WHAT is the attentive observer to make of the birthday celebration of Joseph Estrada, who is supposed to be in detention for charges of graft and plunder? Is one expected to react benignly to this display of feudal power (evident in all his years of confinement in various areas and at any rate encouraged and indulged by President Macapagal-Arroyo's administration)? Does the celebration—complete with a high-powered assembly of callers come to greet Estrada who seemed like a feudal lord, a birthday gift from Ms Macapagal, and what a reporter described as a "gourmet feast"—serve to inform the general public that this is what it can ultimately expect for the man, ignominious ouster from the presidency and charges filed in court notwithstanding?

To think that his past sneak furloughs during assorted holidays have yet to be dealt with by the court and satisfactorily explained to the public. (Of course, in Malacañang's avowed estimation, these have all been within the law.) To think that despite the apparent general erosion of memory, certain people still manage to remember the man's opulent lifestyle (the houses for his paramours, say, the "Boracay villa" that features a wave pool, or the all-night binges with his circle)—the lifestyle that served to trigger public outrage against him.

And yet he thinks nothing of taking a reporter on a tour of his sprawling vacation estate, pointing out various points of interest, using no less than the golf cart sent as a present by his successor in the Palace?

Estrada is, however, nothing if not exuberant, which is probably why his fans, including those who traveled to his estate on his birthday and patiently waited outside the gates during his party, find him endearing. It's true: Exuberance can make any rogue charming. And yet it can also make him uncouth—a state that allows him to, for example, let drop a line or two on his sex life ("zero") and that of the President ("plenty"), with nary a thought to the possibility of offending the sensibilities of the woman who, among other amazing things, never fails to send him birthday presents. (The golf cart is actually one of two, apparently earlier given in connection with Estrada's aching and supposedly fast deteriorating knees, which incidentally did not seem to be acting up during the birthday celebration.)

This is the man whose dignity, so called, Ms Macapagal and her people like to cite and uphold in the course of trying to rationalize the many concessions granted him, such as spending time in his vacation estate to entertain guests despite the absence of a court order. (In South Korea, two ex-presidents, Chun Doo-hwan and Roh Tae-woo, were led into court in handcuffs to answer charges that they had amassed hundreds of millions of dollars in ill-gotten gains.)

This is the man whose presumed idea of the dignity of the presidency included allowing members of the Presidential Security Group to stand guard over his coterie of lovers and offspring, on public funds. The same man who, according to his former close friend and accuser Chavit Singson, would insist on the indelicate chore of counting *jueteng* money himself (by Singson's account, out of a bag, in the privacy of a bedroom).

And yet Ms Macapagal did not see fit to display the same expressed concern for dignity to, say, Acsa Ramirez, the bank cashier who blew the whistle on a scam and then found herself in the humiliating position of a suspect in the same scam. For the longest time before she ultimately apologized, Ms Macapagal perversely left the wife and mother twisting in the wind and fearful for her life, separated from her children and uprooted from her home.

The President has said more than once that her attitude toward Estrada is dictated by her regard for the poor who supposedly see in him an extension of themselves, and who view his suffering as their own. (This is of a piece with her current preferred language: of damning the torpedoes and "serving the people.") But then she is nothing if not astute, a politician of the highest caliber who will grasp and make use of an opportunity wherever and whenever it presents itself.

Back-burner issues

VIEWPOINT

Juan L. Mercado

"DENTRO de Cien Annos" or A Hundred Years Hence (borrowing from the title of Jose Rizal's 1889 essay), which of the issues in today's surreal campaign will matter?

First lady aspirant Susan Roces whacking, on a rally flatbed, a Fernando Poe Jr. campaigner with an "unintended" left jab? Or ignored problems like population-altering land patterns and sapping farmers' capacity to provide "breakfast, lunch and dinner"?

"In a generation or less, severe fragmentation and inheritance patterns will undermine the possibility of families being sustained on their landholdings," warns the United Nations study titled, "Population Dynamics, Land Availability and Adapting Land Tenure Systems."

Population didn't "decline at rates previously projected," demographers-authors Soccoro Gultiano and Peter Urich note. The "country is ill-prepared to accommodate... this stretched period of growth."

Gultiano teaches at San Carlos University's Office of Population Studies. Urich specializes in Philippine population and land tenure at New Zealand's International Global Change Institute. Leyte State University's Edwin Balbarino and Efren Saz were collaborating researchers.

The Philippines is one of 88 low-income, food-deficit countries and lagged in creating jobs, the UN's Food and Agriculture Organization study notes. Ineffective reforms, plus a "system that denies access to land, (undercuts) sustained food security."

The population figure you first learned dates you. We're a country of 19 million, our civics teacher said. By last year, population had quadrupled to 81.6 million. Without change, there'd be 132.8 million Filipinos in two decades.

There's widespread chronic hunger here. It's not uncommon to have areas with full granaries, due to "high per capita cereal production (but also) burdened by high incidence of malnutrition," the report notes.

The Fifth National Nutrition Survey Updates reveals that of 19 "nutritionally-at-risk provinces" identified earlier, 8 still had 4 out of every 10 kids malnourished and underweight.

Saddled with the largest concentrations of ill-fed kids were (percentages rounded): Western Samar, 47; Biliran, 44; Northern Samar, Masbate as well as "sacada country" Negros Oriental, 43; Antique, 42; and Sorsogon, 40.

To cope, the hard-pressed use their feet. The skilled leave for abroad, clocked at 3,568 daily since January. Of 37 medical specialists in a Visayan city, 27 were training as nurses to get a quick visa. "In two or three years, we'll have a dearth of specialists," an oncologist-friend predicts. Others swap poverty in farms for penury in slums, in Manila or regional centers like Cebu. Farm populations, as a result, are "greying."

Poorly educated people spill into public lands. These make up nearly 50 percent of total land area. Their numbers now exceed absorptive capacity and usher in ecological decay. "The potential for this resource to act as a safety valve is rapidly diminishing."

Today's agrarian reform seeks "to appease a restless peasantry. But it is not radical enough to antagonize the landed oligarchy which dominates local politics."

Reform "in privately held lands" is equally turtle-paced. Experience of ineffective reforms undermine additional corrective efforts. "Already, clandestine forms of land accumulation and adaptation are happening."

"Sheer population size and growth in rural areas will severely constrain the gains of any agrarian reform measure," the scientists assert. "The land at present is already over-exploited."

Gaining a hectare or two do meet some immediate needs. But given continuing high fertility rates, individual farms may become no more than backyard gardens.

The link between population growth and land degradation, as in sloping marginal uplands of Leyte and peri-urban Cebu may be weak, the study says. Degradation started decades back.

"The stronger link is with land tenure regimes and inequality in access to land and other problems rooted in an ineffective industrialization policy" in a country of surging numbers.

The study cautions against the complacent claim that today's harvests can ensure 98 kilograms of grain for every Filipino yearly over the long term.

This assumes national production figures are accurate. And will climatic conditions remain static? "The weather changes with every hundred li," a Chinese proverb says.

"Droughts and storms inevitably tax the country's self-sufficiency," they point out. "The extended drought of 1998 had a greater impact on the Philippine economy and poverty than the Asian financial crisis."

Rarely discussed but providing critical linchpins are rice markets. "Anecdotal evidence exists of a failure to conserve during periods of relative prosperity in production for times of hardship."

This trend is not limited to local economies, they observe. It "applies to the nation as a whole." As Pampango farmers advise: "Save rice bran before you raise hogs."

The Philippines achieved rice self-sufficiency in 12 of the last 30 years. Ability to shop abroad for grain to feed growing populations "soon have to weigh against other pressing expenses in the national budget."

"Change in the system of land tenure is one of the mostly highly charged issues," the study notes. It is "one that brings out the best and the worst in people and society."

* * *

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Sacrifices

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

(*Concluded*)

I'M glad Ibarra Gutierrez wrote what he did. I have at least someone to point to (other than myself) to show the alternative is by no means hypothetical; it is real. The choice of coming back to the country, or indeed staying put, may now take on the aspect of the road not taken, or the one littered with sharp stones, but as Gutierrez shows, that is the illusion and not the reality. It is the paradise espied in the distance that is the illusion and not the reality. Or it is the mirage and not the oasis.

I had a similar experience when I was in the United States three years ago. The salesman in the department store where I bought a memory stick for a camcorder was a Filipino, and he was absolutely delighted when he discovered I was a *kababayan*. He said he thought at first I was Japanese. I wanted the 128 MB, but they only had the 64 MB. But not to worry, he said, he would order the 128 and it would be there the following week. I thanked him but said I wouldn't be around the following week. He gave me a card, saying he'd keep me abreast of sales the department store would have in future, and asked me where I was going. He was absolutely discombobulated when I said back to Manila. I swear his jaw fell. He could not grasp the idea.

He asked me what I wanted to do a damn fool thing like that for, or that was the subtext of his more polite question. I said I had a job in Manila. He countered that there were jobs in the United States and they paid better. He himself had been a high school teacher in Iloilo, he said, and he could barely support his wife and two kids with his pay. He had gotten to the United States only after much effort. He was denied a visa several times, but he persevered and managed to get one in the end. I did not ask him what kind. He took one odd job after another until he became a clerk in the department store. By dint of hard work, he eventually got promoted to the camera section. He would never dream of going back to Iloilo, he said.

Like Gutierrez, I have heard friends in the United States explain me away almost apologetically (to themselves most of all) as being a "nationalist." That presumably is the reason I am not joining them in the land of the free and brave, free enough to work your ass off for the cottage with the picket fence and brave enough to endure cold, exile and meaninglessness to do it: I am a "nationalist."

Well, if "nationalist" means to continue to believe in this country, notwithstanding resolute proof of its predilection for suicide, and armed only with the vision or hope it can be better, then I guess I am a nationalist. If "nationalist" means to read our history or know the past, something most Filipinos refuse to do, and having it for guide to glimpse the way to the future, then I guess I am a nationalist. If "nationalist" means to relate to other people as a Filipino, as someone who has a home, an identity and pride in his national patrimony, who has *malasakit* or can feel deeply for his country, then I guess I am a nationalist.

It is no big deal, it is what the people of other countries have. And it is a testament to our impoverishment that what is routine and natural and obvious to them take on the aspect of epic heroism for us.

But it isn't just this that drives me to stay here and try to make things better, however seemingly hopeless that has become, no small thanks to a procession of vicious leaders who seem determined to send this country hurtling to the precipice. Not least this last one, who is now depleting the national coffers to remain in power. Gutierrez hits the nail on the head when he asks, what are you really giving up when you choose to stay here? Unless you are an overseas Filipino worker who is compelled to leave from the stark choice of living or dying, toiling in the desert or starving in a lush land, what sacrifices are you making?

You are not going to starve on a teacher's pay, however small that is. You are not going to starve on a journalist's pay, however iniquitous it is. And you are not going to starve on whatever material rewards come from working in an NGO, exercising a profession (engineering, law, architecture, medicine, priesthood), or painting, playing music and writing, however meager they are. Arguably, you will earn more elsewhere, notwithstanding that you are reduced to being a maid in Kowloon, a caretaker in Toronto, or a salesclerk in a camera shop in Los Angeles. But that brings us to the heart of the matter:

All you really lose is a "pursuit of happiness," a right enshrined in the Constitution, that has to do with acquiring more and more—or at least more than the next fellow. That is the largely unquestioned premise of this monumental Diaspora, the rod by which we measure success. You are a doctor in this country, you compare yourself to what Filipino caregivers abroad get and you will be envious. But you compare yourself to the bedraggled mass huddling in a tiny corner of this wretched metropolis, and you will consider yourself lucky. You are a public school teacher, you will be hard put to buy your two kids chicken dinners from Jollibee every week. But you will be able to buy them shoes and books and send them to school where the barefooted and tubercular farmer fighting off pests in the fields won't.

Frankly, I too cannot understand that attitude of many Filipinos in the United States who say that if this country can only provide them jobs and investment opportunities that will allow them to enjoy the amenities they have there, they would not think twice about repairing here. Gutierrez is right: thankfully, he doesn't have to demand those conditions to want to live here. I don't either.

I figure I'm not the one who's making sacrifices. They are.

Quid pro quo?

POLITICAL TIDBITS

Belinda Olivares-Cunanan

THE PESO has gained strength in the past two weeks and this was obviously triggered by the results of Pulse Asia's March 28 to April 4 survey showing President Macapagal-Arroyo overtaking Fernando Poe Jr. and leading by three percentage points. That breakthrough and subsequent developments, such as the realignments caused by the sudden departure of Raul Roco for abroad and the continuing failure of unity talks in the opposition, have triggered perceptions of a GMA bandwagon, as various political groups defected to her camp.

The peso's strength is evidently anchored on the perception that GMA would emerge winner and that, as Sen. Joker Arroyo put it, her archrival FPJ "now faces an uphill fight."

* * *

Further boosting the peso's recovery was the decision of the world's largest pension fund, California Public Employees' Retirement System (CalPERS), to keep its $67 million investments in Philippine stocks. CalPERS' decision is a big boon to the country as well as to GMA personally from this demonstration of confidence, inasmuch as this fund is regarded as the leader in its field and influences the decisions of similar funds abroad. The government's stubborn refusal to give up on CalPERS has paid off.

There is, however, suspicions in the minds of some people of a quid pro quo. Is CalPERS staying provided the small unit of RP troops remain in Iraq? Having our small contingent there is important for US President Bush especially following the pullout of the Spanish troops.

* * *

Australian business executive Peter Wallace, in a statement last April 14 titled "In Search of a Leader," warned local businessmen that "if they sit on the fence, or worse, play both sides, and Fernando Poe Jr. wins, they'll inherit a country where growth won't occur. And maybe a military takeover will (happen)." Apparently, the business community has made up its mind now. As Bulletin columnist Beth Day Romulo noted recently, compared to some "rather testy confrontations" in the past, GMA's appearance before the general membership of the Makati Business Club last April 14 was "a love feast." Romulo asserted that "when GMA has favorable ratings, the peso and the stock market and foreign investors react favorably. When the opposition is ahead, the stock market and the investment climate are static or gloomy."

The peso's recovery should be an unmistakable signal to groups with big command votes such as the Iglesia ni Cristo and El Shaddai that the local and foreign businesses have very little confidence in FPJ. Many Filipinos pray that the leaders of these religious blocs will read this signal right.

* * *

It's difficult to make people believe there was no "sweetheart deal" between the Macapagal administration and San Miguel Corp. chair Eduardo Cojuangco that allowed him to retain the chairmanship of the country's biggest corporation with the help of the votes of government board members. In the minds of some people, the administration did not maneuver hard enough to yank out Cojuangco in exchange perhaps for his support for GMA.

It will be noted that Cojuangco, who founded the Nationalist People's Coalition and continues to call the shots, is perceived to be playing both sides. Recall that GMA was abandoned by the NPC bloc in Negros, led by Gov. Joseph Marañon and Rep. Alfred Marañon, a move many believed had Cojuangco's blessing. On the other hand, there's the open support for GMA by his two sons, Representatives Mark and Charlie Cojuangco, and his nephew Rep. Gilbert Teodoro, as well as prominent NPC leaders in Luzon such as Tarlac Gov. Jose Yap, Nueva Ecija Gov. Tomas Joson and Isabela Gov. Faustino Dy Jr.

* * *

Of the 60 NPC members in the House, 45 are said to be with GMA and 15 with FPJ. Earlier, there were speculations that Cojuangco would fund the candidacy of FPJ, and that the actor would not have joined the derby without Cojuangco's support. In the tight race between GMA and FPJ, obviously the support of a big and cohesive group such as the NPC is crucial. But it's evident that the majority of the NPC are with GMA.

From the pragmatic standpoint, it may have been deemed unwise for the administration to rock the SMC boat during this election year. Asked about the recent voting, the President said she was leaving the matter to the PCGG. It would be interesting to hear how PCGG chair Haydee Yorac explains her agency's moves.

* * *

Barangay Bel-Air in Makati, which was created in 1957, is "more than the usual village," says its chair Constancia "Nene" Lichauco. I believed this when I met its dynamic leaders recently, especially the Women of Bel-Air. Few communities around this country have displayed as much community and civic spirit than this wealthy barangay. This prompted Makati Mayor Jejomar Binay to declare Bel Air as "probably the most ideal and nicest community in Makati." It has won awards for being the "cleanest and greenest village" and "best belen décor" for the past seven consecutive years, and for the past 10 years, it has held a very successful annual "Karnabal sa Bel-Air—Pasinaya."

At noon tomorrow, Karnabal-Pasinaya 2004 kicks off and it will last until Sunday. There will be a bazaar, *perya* rides, a food fest, free *kalesa* rides, a parade of bands, a canine show, art and dance contests, a car show and motorcade, bingo games, a cooking demonstration with Margarita Fores and performances by big stars. The highlight of the celebration is an extraordinary musical presentation titled, "Bodabil sa Bel-Air" and "Sabor Latino Live in Bel-Air" to be performed by the residents of Bel-Air Village themselves on the last day. For particulars call Nene Lichauco at 897-1856 or 895-4011.

'Let the healing begin'

HUMAN FACE

Ma. Ceres P. Doyo

HAPPY Earth Day!

What nationalist Filipino does not know that "Pearls R Us"?

But pearls could be a source of conflict. Jewelmer Corp., a Cojuangco-owned operator of a large pearl farm in Palawan, has been the subject of complaints there. Recently 500 members of indigenous groups, some clad in traditional costumes, sailed on their boats to fish in the waters off the islands near Bugsuk and Pandanan in Balabac, Palawan. These areas are currently off limits to fishermen.

Those who dared "intrude" belonged to the Pal'wan and Molbog tribes and were members of the Samahang Tribo sa Dulo ng Timog Palawan (Sambilog). With the help of the Jesuit-influenced PhilDHRRA, they are claiming back their rights to the 57,000 hectares of ancestral land and waters occupied by Jewelmer.

Sambilog head Sanglima Rudy Calo said that Jewelmer "has prohibited us from fishing in these waters for almost two decades. But these had been traditional fishing grounds for our ancestors. And now we learned that the operation of the pearl farm is illegal. It does not have an environmental compliance certificate from the Department of Environment and Natural Resources or any clearance from the Palawan Council for Sustainable Development. They have not acquired any consent certificate from us either."

Those who have ogled at luscious pearls at Jewelmer stores and scanned their expensive coffee-table book would know why these South Sea pearls are very expensive. I was once tempted to buy a pair of champagne-colored dangling earrings there, but the price said, go away. I settled for a look-alike, costing about one-tenth, sold by Muslim traders at a mall *tiangge*.

In some parts of the waters off the islands of Palawan, I've seen hundreds of these unsightly floating boxes where pearl oysters grow. You could get shot at if you go near, I was warned.

Sambilog, I learned, had tried to dialogue with Jewelmer officials. The first dialogue was held in Malacañang last August. Jewelmer and Balabac Mayor Astani agreed to hold more talks but nothing has happened since.

Sambilog is invoking the indigenous peoples law and demanding a Certificate of Ancestral Domain Title for the fishermen as well as a cease-and-desist order to Jewelmer. The fishermen said they were victims of a land swap between Eduardo Cojuangco and President Ferdinand Marcos in 1974, and now they want to recover what they had lost.

* * *

Who owns the sea?

Blue sea, blue planet. Two US-based groups, each one claiming to have started Earth Day celebrations in 1970, are at odds on the matter of the date of Earth Day. One wants to stick to the March date of the vernal equinox, the other to an April date which is what most people are familiar with now. It seems the April people have prevailed, judging from the expansion of the Earth Day Network.

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"Let the healing begin." The patient is Mother Earth Philippines and its 7,100 islands. The caregivers are you and me. Individuals and groups are enjoined to join in caregiving.

Last week I quoted Antoine de Saint-Exupéry as saying that we often fail to see the cord that binds us to the wells and fountains, the umbilical cord by which we are tied to the womb of the world. This womb contains the waters that sustain life on the planet. Poison these and life dies.

Last year, the United Nations declared 2003 as the International Year of Freshwater. The Earth Day Network supported this campaign by launching a two-year Water for Life Campaign until 2004.

We always think of food as a human right. Well, water is also a human right and this is something quite distinct because water, unlike food, is not grown, it is there for everyone, for the taking. Water knows no boundaries. The water in the rivers, seas and lakes goes as far as it can go, it does not stop on geographical boundaries. We dread the day when nations go to war over water supply or when terrorist warfare finds its way into the water supply of this world.

Earth Day Network's Water for Life campaign hopes to bring global attention to the world's water crisis. More than one billion people lack access to safe drinking water and more than two billion lack sanitation. According to the World Health Organization, millions of people, most of them children, die from water-related diseases every year.

It's the government's responsibility to provide enough water not just for drinking but for crops as well. The current trend toward privatization in water services could weaken public control and threaten ample supply. Private business interests could take precedence over people's basic human right to access to water. But then, there are many opportunities and challenges, too, to help private enterprises prove that sustainability could also mean good business.

Last February, World Bank Philippines launched its 2003 Philippines Environment Monitor on Water Quality and highlighted poor water quality and sanitation services.

The government's monitoring revealed that just over 36 percent of the country's river systems are classified as sources of public water supply and up to 58 percent of groundwater sampled is contaminated with coliform and needs treatment.

It's later than you think. Earth caregivers, unite.

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On party switching

THE LONG VIEW

Manuel L. Quezon III

A LOCAL politician once told me, "*Kailangan ng Pinoy ng konting hampas*" (which I'd translate as "The Filipino needs a little slap and tickle") to explain the general low view many politicians (and those who elect them) have of our people. To my mind, this says less about the way we really are and more about the low opinion those who lead have of us, the people. Another example of how politicians think they can fool the people all the time (when, as is often said, you can only fool them some of the time) is the manner in which politicians engage in party switching.

Party switching is interesting because it seems to work all of the time in local politics, but not all of the time in national politics. Observers love to point out that before martial law, there was no real difference between the Nacionalista and Liberal parties, which is wrong. A closer look shows that the battle lines between Sergio Osmeña and Manuel Roxas in 1945-46, when the two parties were born, delineated the difference between the two parties. On the whole, elections that resulted in one of the two parties coming out on top did result in changes in policy. The Liberal Party was an advocate of free trade; the Nacionalista Party was protectionist. Circumstances might make, say, a Liberal administration more protectionist than usual (as under Elpidio Quirino), but it would take a Nacionalista administration, for example, to implement Filipino First, which was more interested in helping local industrialists than attracting foreign capital.

The lazy and easy conclusion that the two parties weren't different stems from the way politicians at the bottom and the top kept switching sides. But even here, the present blurs our appreciation of the past. As with all things, what is new and exciting today becomes old hat tomorrow. What a politician does with some justification yesterday becomes an example open to abuse in the present. There is no finer example of this than the way Manuel L. Quezon's party switching of yesterday is used to justify party switching today.

Quezon, from the time he entered national politics as an assemblyman elected as an independent in 1907, to his death in 1944 (a period of 37 years) switched parties twice. He left the Nacionalista Party in 1922 (forming the Collectevista Liberal Party), and again in 1933-34 (setting up the Nacionalista Democrata), and then reunited the split party afterwards, as the Nacionalista Consolidado and then the Nacionalista Coalition. In the same period of time, Winston Churchill changed parties the same number of times (he was also accused of being a traitor and opportunist by his party mates). Claro M. Recto started as a Democrata, became a Nacionalista and remained one until he ran against Carlos P. Garcia, and then resumed being a nominal Nacionalista afterwards. Roxas changed parties once, when he set up the Liberal Party as the heir of the Collectevista Party in 1946; Ramon Magsaysay changed party affiliations once, as did Ferdinand Marcos during the period before martial law. In the cases of these politicians, their leaving their party was anchored on a difference of views that could be expressed in terms that went beyond pure ambition.

On the other hand, for 40 years, ordinary Filipinos remained fiercely loyal Liberals or Nacionalistas, and the electorate did look askance at politicians who indulged in party switching so often as to invite suspicions that they were either flighty or too ambitious. Emmanuel Pelaez, for one, was criticized for being a "political butterfly." But even as politicians at the top might save their party switching for a time when a career-making or -breaking issue presented itself, and loyal party members who were ordinary citizens devoted their lives to their parties, local officials by the 1950s had gladly adopted party switching as their chief political credo. Ninoy Aquino, as a Tarlac local leader, justified switching from LP to NP depending on which party controlled the Palace, as a matter of political (that is, financial) survival. With the passing of genuine party stalwarts before and during martial law, it was inevitable that the concept of party loyalty, however superficially asserted, would vanish completely as the local opportunists of the past became the national leaders of the present.

I think it is dangerous to underestimate the corrosive influence local politics has on the national. Particularly when our system makes it more and more difficult for politicians to develop from local to national leaders. Recto once sarcastically remarked, referring to Sergio Osmeña, that "the problem with Sergio is that he is statesman in Manila and a politician when in Cebu." This nasty but shrewd comment, I think, is an insight into the problem local leaders have when they act on the national stage.

Quezon himself once confided to an ally that he lost his fear of Osmeña when, as vice president, Osmeña seemed more interested in securing jobs for his supporters than taking part in the affairs of the Cabinet. Osmeña's development as something of a secular saint would take place while in exile and in his last political campaign in 1946. Not before. *(To be continued)*

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Dish-washing memoirs

YOUNG BLOOD

Lailani Mendoza

We want to know what the young are thinking about. What are their thoughts on current issues? We welcome contributions from the twentysomething and below.—Ed.

WHO would have thought that a pile of dirty dishes, soapy water and at least 30 minutes every night would bring someone lasting memories? Not me. Or at least that's what I thought at first—until I experienced the magic firsthand.

Nobody likes doing the dishes, especially if there's a dishwasher around. It's just too tempting to stack all the soiled dishes in, push a button and admire the miracle of technology when all the work is done for you. After all, who has time to do the dishes manually these days?

Unfortunately, we do. Or we make time to do it. We were brought up thinking that if you can do something with your own hands, then do it with your own hands. In fact, before we moved to Canada, we used to wash every single bit of clothing manually. Leaving everything for the household appliances to do was considered a sign of laziness. And much as we wanted to just let the machine do the work and get some free time for "more important" stuff, my sister and I also didn't want to be labeled as a sluggish bunch.

In short, we did the tedious job. My sister and I were the official dishwashers at home. Between the two of us, we performed this nightly ritual after supper: clearing the table, wiping the table, stove top and counter, sweeping the entire kitchen floor occasionally, and of course, washing the dishes. Boring? Very. But over a span of 30 minutes each night, my sister and I found a special time for reconnecting and communicating with each other.

We used to detest the length of time it took to finish the chore as well as the monotony of the task. "Unexciting" was definitely an understatement for this kind of dull activity. But though we rebelled at the imposition, we had no choice but to adapt to the situation, like what primitive humans did to survive.

We two human beings living in the 21st century resolved to overcome this primitive chore by adapting in a number of ways. First, we would sing. Actually, it was I who did the singing, while my sister did her famous second-voice, out-of-tune renditions to distract me. She got a big kick doing that. Or sometimes we'd both sing a song being played on the radio, but with high-pitched, "Chip and Dale" voices.

To further ease our boredom, we'd crack jokes. I don't see myself as somebody who can make a living as a stand-up comedian; and some of my friends even mock me for my "inability" to deliver a joke properly. But in Aileen, I have actually found someone who laughs at my jokes and not at me. One time I didn't exactly know what came over me, but I suddenly started cracking really lame jokes. At first she told me to stop, but after some time, we were both red in the face from laughing hard. I couldn't remember the last time I had laughed so heartily. Although normally those jokes weren't really funny, we still had much fun telling and retelling them.

Most importantly, we'd talk, which was something we hadn't had much time for. Ever since we hit adolescence and found our own circle of friends, we seldom really enjoyed a good conversation together. Like most siblings, we used to go for each other's throat all the time. When we were doing the dishes, however, we didn't have any choice but to speak to each other.

Sometimes we would look out the window and make good-humored fun of the people we saw passing. Observing other people could be interesting, and in our case our observations usually became the start of our conversation.

Aileen and I are products of exactly the same upbringing, but we turned out to be two very different individuals. I am Ms Nice Girl who tries hard to obey the rules. Rules can be very restricting, but somehow I feel lost without them. I am the conformist who tries to please everybody. I try to be the perfect child, a straight-A student and everybody's best friend.

Aileen is Ms Independent. She wants to live by her own rules. She's not afraid to explore and do something new all the time. She does not care what other people think. She knows what she wants and her mind is set on accomplishing her goals even to the point of being stubborn.

I like books and writing, she likes hanging out with friends and painting. We both like music, but I like pop and she goes for alternative rock.

You get the picture. The chances of us really getting into a conversation to be more in tune with the other are slim. But during our dish-washing routine, we had some quality time together.

Night after night, we'd talk until, much to my surprise, I discovered that I could be as open to her as to my best friend. With each stack of dishes we washed, the gaps and minor differences we had were smoothed over. I began to see my sister in a new light. From the "what's-up-with-your-planet" chat we normally had, we progressed to having real heart-to-heart conversations.

Of course, there were a few instances when we reverted to our usual bickering. But even during those times, we learned to get over our arguments more without leaving some tension hanging in the air.

Now, Aileen is back in the Philippines but for some complicated reasons, I chose to stay behind. I usually do all the dishwashing these days. And as I slowly go about it, I realize that I have learned to enjoy it and that I have learned many things because of it. For one thing, I found a common ground with my sister. Without the experience, we would have drifted apart and taken completely different directions without really knowing each other. I learned to listen and open up to her, and this greatly improved our relationship and lessened our misunderstandings. I believe the experience helped us mature emotionally.

I hope Aileen will cherish our dish-washing memories as much as I do because the experience opened my eyes and taught me the value of having her as a sister. Not even the most expensive brand of dishwasher could have done that.

Lailani Mendoza, 21, is studying Journalism at the University College of the Cariboo in Kamloops, British Columbia, Canada. She says she remains a Filipino at heart.

THEY SAID

Work

"Work is meditation for me. I am always inspired by my wife, my family, the environment around me."
—*Artist Peter Pinder on his artworks*

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Quid pro quo?

POLITICAL TIDBITS

Belinda Olivares-Cunanan

THE PESO has gained strength in the past two weeks and this was obviously triggered by the results of Pulse Asia's March 28 to April 4 survey showing President Macapagal-Arroyo overtaking Fernando Poe Jr. and leading by three percentage points. That breakthrough and subsequent developments, such as the realignments caused by the sudden departure of Raul Roco for abroad and the continuing failure of unity talks in the opposition, have triggered perceptions of a GMA bandwagon, as various political groups defected to her camp.

The peso's strength is evidently anchored on the perception that GMA would emerge winner and that, as Sen. Joker Arroyo put it, her archrival FPJ "now faces an uphill fight."

* * *

Further boosting the peso's recovery was the decision of the world's largest pension fund, California Public Employees' Retirement System (CalPERS), to keep its $67 million investments in Philippine stocks. CalPERS' decision is a big boon to the country as well as to GMA personally from this demonstration of confidence, inasmuch as this fund is regarded as the leader in its field and influences the decisions of similar funds abroad. The government's stubborn refusal to give up on CalPERS has paid off.

There is, however, suspicions in the minds of some people of a quid pro quo. Is CalPERS staying provided the small unit of RP troops remain in Iraq? Having our small contingent there is important for US President Bush especially following the pullout of the Spanish troops.

* * *

Australian business executive Peter Wallace, in a statement last April 14 titled "In Search of a Leader," warned local businessmen that "if they sit on the fence, or worse, play both sides, and Fernando Poe Jr. wins, they'll inherit a country where growth won't occur. And maybe a military takeover will (happen)." Apparently, the business community has made up its mind now. As Bulletin columnist Beth Day Romulo noted recently, compared to some "rather testy confrontations" in the past, GMA's appearance before the general membership of the Makati Business Club last April 14 was "a love feast." Romulo asserted that "when GMA has favorable ratings, the peso and the stock market and foreign investors react favorably. When the opposition is ahead, the stock market and the investment climate are static or gloomy."

The peso's recovery should be an unmistakable signal to groups with big command votes such as the Iglesia ni Cristo and El Shaddai that the local and foreign businesses have very little confidence in FPJ. Many Filipinos pray that the leaders of these religious blocs will read this signal right.

* * *

It's difficult to make people believe there was no "sweetheart deal" between the Macapagal administration and San Miguel Corp. chair Eduardo Cojuangco that allowed him to retain the chairmanship of the country's biggest corporation with the help of the votes of government board members. In the minds of some people, the administration did not maneuver hard enough to yank out Cojuangco in exchange perhaps for his support for GMA.

It will be noted that Cojuangco, who founded the Nationalist People's Coalition and continues to call the shots, is perceived to be playing both sides. Recall that GMA was abandoned by the NPC bloc in Negros, led by Gov. Joseph Marañon and Rep. Alfred Marañon, a move many believed had Cojuangco's blessing. On the other hand, there's the open support for GMA by his two sons, Representatives Mark and Charlie Cojuangco, and his nephew Rep. Gilbert Teodoro, as well as prominent NPC leaders in Luzon such as Tarlac Gov. Jose Yap, Nueva Ecija Gov. Tomas Joson and Isabela Gov. Faustino Dy Jr.

* * *

Of the 60 NPC members in the House, 45 are said to be with GMA and 15 with FPJ. Earlier, there were speculations that Cojuangco would fund the candidacy of FPJ, and that the actor would not have joined the derby without Cojuangco's support. In the tight race between GMA and FPJ, obviously the support of a big and cohesive group such as the NPC is crucial. But it's evident that the majority of the NPC are with GMA.

From the pragmatic standpoint, it may have been deemed unwise for the administration to rock the SMC boat during this election year. Asked about the recent voting, the President said she was leaving the matter to the PCGG. It would be interesting to hear how PCGG chair Haydee Yorac explains her agency's moves.

* * *

Barangay Bel-Air in Makati, which was created in 1957, is "more than the usual village," says its chair Constancia "Nene" Lichauco. I believed this when I met its dynamic leaders recently, especially the Women of Bel-Air. Few communities around this country have displayed as much community and civic spirit than this wealthy barangay. This prompted Makati Mayor Jejomar Binay to declare Bel Air as "probably the most ideal and nicest community in Makati." It has won awards for being the "cleanest and greenest village" and "best belen décor" for the past seven consecutive years, and for the past 10 years, it has held a very successful annual "Karnabal sa Bel-Air—Pasinaya."

At noon tomorrow, Karnabal-Pasinaya 2004 kicks off and it will last until Sunday. There will be a bazaar, *perya* rides, a food fest, free *kalesa* rides, a parade of bands, a canine show, art and dance contests, a car show and motorcade, bingo games, a cooking demonstration with Margarita Fores and performances by big stars. The highlight of the celebration is an extraordinary musical presentation titled, "Bodabil sa Bel-Air" and "Sabor Latino Live in Bel-Air" to be performed by the residents of Bel-Air Village themselves on the last day. For particulars call Nene Lichauco at 897-1856 or 895-4011.

'Let the healing begin'

HUMAN FACE

Ma. Ceres P. Doyo

HAPPY Earth Day!

What nationalist Filipino does not know that "Pearls R Us"?

But pearls could be a source of conflict. Jewelmer Corp., a Cojuangco-owned operator of a large pearl farm in Palawan, has been the subject of complaints there. Recently 500 members of indigenous groups, some clad in traditional costumes, sailed on their boats to fish in the waters off the islands near Bugsuk and Pandanan in Balabac, Palawan. These areas are currently off limits to fishermen.

Those who dared "intrude" belonged to the Pal'wan and Molbog tribes and were members of the Samahang Tribo sa Dulo ng Timog Palawan (Sambilog). With the help of the Jesuit-influenced PhilDHRRA, they are claiming back their rights to the 57,000 hectares of ancestral land and waters occupied by Jewelmer.

Sambilog head Sanglima Rudy Calo said that Jewelmer "has prohibited us from fishing in these waters for almost two decades. But these had been traditional fishing grounds for our ancestors. And now we learned that the operation of the pearl farm is illegal. It does not have an environmental compliance certificate from the Department of Environment and Natural Resources or any clearance from the Palawan Council for Sustainable Development. They have not acquired any consent certificate from us either."

Those who have ogled at luscious pearls at Jewelmer stores and scanned their expensive coffee-table book would know why these South Sea pearls are very expensive. I was once tempted to buy a pair of champagne-colored dangling earrings there, but the price said, go away. I settled for a look-alike, costing about one-tenth, sold by Muslim traders at a mall *tiangge*.

In some parts of the waters off the islands of Palawan, I've seen hundreds of these unsightly floating boxes where pearl oysters grow. You could get shot at if you go near, I was warned.

Sambilog, I learned, had tried to dialogue with Jewelmer officials. The first dialogue was held in Malacañang last August. Jewelmer and Balabac Mayor Astani agreed to hold more talks but nothing has happened since.

Sambilog is invoking the indigenous peoples law and demanding a Certificate of Ancestral Domain Title for the fishermen as well as a cease-and-desist order to Jewelmer. The fishermen said they were victims of a land swap between Eduardo Cojuangco and President Ferdinand Marcos in 1974, and now they want to recover what they had lost.

* * *

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Most importantly, we'd talk, which was something we hadn't had much time for. Ever since we hit adolescence and found our own circle of friends, we seldom really enjoyed a good conversation together. Like most siblings, we used to go for each other's throat all the time. When we were doing the dishes, however, we didn't have any choice but to speak to each other.

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I like books and writing, she likes hanging out with friends and painting. We both like music, but I like pop and she goes for alternative rock.

You get the picture. The chances of us really getting into a conversation to be more in tune with the other are slim. But during our dish-washing routine, we had some quality time together.

Night after night, we'd talk until, much to my surprise, I discovered that I could be as open to her as to my best friend. With each stack of dishes we washed, the gaps and minor differences we had were smoothed over. I began to see my sister in a new light. From the "what's-up-with-your-planet" chat we normally had, we progressed to having real heart-to-heart conversations.

Of course, there were a few instances when we reverted to our usual bickering. But even during those times, we learned to get over our arguments more without leaving some tension hanging in the air.

Now, Aileen is back in the Philippines but for some complicated reasons, I chose to stay behind. I usually do all the dishwashing these days. And as I slowly go about it, I realize that I have learned to enjoy it and that I have learned many things because of it. For one thing, I found a common ground with my sister. Without the experience, we would have drifted apart and taken completely different directions without really knowing each other. I learned to listen and open up to her, and this greatly improved our relationship and lessened our misunderstandings. I believe the experience helped us mature emotionally.

I hope Aileen will cherish our dish-washing memories as much as I do because the experience opened my eyes and taught me the value of having her as a sister. Not even the most expensive brand of dishwasher could have done that.

Lailani Mendoza, 21, is studying Journalism at the University College of the Cariboo in Kamloops, British Columbia, Canada. She says she remains a Filipino at heart.

THEY SAID

Work

"Work is meditation for me. I am always inspired by my wife, my family, the environment around me."
—*Artist Peter Pinder on his artworks*

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TALK of the TOWN

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Editor Juan V. Sarmiento Jr.

How green are the presidential bets?

TODAY is Earth Day. It started 34 years ago as a day of huge grassroots protests over what was happening to the land, rivers, lakes and air in the United States. Since then, it has been observed worldwide amid growing concerns over the continued environmental degradation of the "third rock from the sun" that some 6.4 billion members of the *homo sapiens*, along with countless other species, great and small, call home.

It's the only one we've got. But overexploitation of its resources is leading to the extinction of a growing number of species, including butterflies and birds, which form part of the web of life. Ecosystems are dying from overfishing, razing of forests, farming practices dependent on chemicals, and burning of fossil fuels by cars and power plants.

For future generations to breathe fresh air and see the rainforest, people will have to change their lifestyle. It means using only what one needs. Countries and companies must adopt sustainable development practices. For the next President, it means promoting renewable energy and protecting the forests, lakes and seas, and reducing the debt payments, among others.

A new book, "The Anti-Development State: The Political Economy of Permanent Crisis in the Philippines," says that the environmental impact of the stagnation amid crisis that stemmed from the "debt repayment first" strategy in the 1980s was much more comprehensive.

Quoting a study by the World Resources Institute, the book says the debt repayment first strategy "created so much unemployment and migration patterns changed drastically. The large migration to Manila declined and most migrants could turn only to open access forests, watersheds, and artisanal fisheries. Thus, the major environment effect of the economic crisis was overexploitation of these vulnerable resources." The debt repayment first strategy remains.

Let's make democracy work for a greener future

By Von Hernandez
Convenor
2004 Green Electoral Initiative

With less than a month before Filipinos troop to the polls, the environment has yet to figure as one of the essential issues in the public debates on the plans and programs of those aspiring for national office.

For the most part, the ongoing campaign has been defined by an exasperating focus on traditional and celebrity-based politics and the gratuitous, over-the-top treatment of personal scandals and non-issues the country could very well do without.

While issues around the economy, the peace and order situation and the delivery of affordable public services tend to dominate most discussions involving political platforms of candidates, environmental issues are often given scant, sometimes not even nominal, treatment in those programs. This is truly ironic considering that the environment is the context within which all other human activities take place. Moreover, for a country, which continues to suffer from a staggering number of environment-related calamities, it is unthinkable that this issue still has not merited prominence in current political debates.

Ecological calamities like the Ormoc tragedy, Payatas dump's collapse, Marcopper disaster, the Southern Leyte landslides, and the worsening air pollution in Metro Manila all underscore the fact that the environment has become an issue of survival. With the breakdown of ecosystems, the delivery of valuable ecological services necessary for sustaining life is severely compromised.

As part of this year's observance of *Earth Day*, leading environmental groups in the country have come together to form the 2004 Green Electoral Initiative (GEI) in an attempt to project the environment as a key electoral issue.

Eight issues

The GEI sought to determine the stand of candidates for national office on eight environmental issues, and, in the process, established who among the candidates represent the best prospects for the Philippine environment. The issues in the questionnaire the GEI sent to the candidates were:

- Genetically modified organisms or GMOs
- Air pollution
- Water
- Logging
- Mining
- Overfishing
- Toxic waste in the former American military bases

On the basis of their responses, candidates were ranked using a green to gray rating spectrum. In ranking the candidates, evaluators placed more premium on progressive and concrete measures that candidates intended to carry out once in office, rather than the general and fuzzy motherhood statements on the environment which usually inform the platforms of politicians.

Among the five presidential candidates, Raul Roco emerged as the greenest with an environmental agenda that includes the fast-paced and local government unit—focused implementation of the Ecological Solid Waste Management Act, an immediate moratorium on the release of genetically modified organisms, a strong demand for the United States to clean up its toxic legacies in Clark and Subic, support for the development of alternative non-polluting fuels and renewable energy sources, time-bound phase-out of dirty coal plants, and the enforcement of a recent Supreme Court ruling which declared certain provisions of the Mining Act unconstitutional, particularly the granting of service contracts to foreign mining firms.

Fernando Poe Jr. ranked a distant second to Roco. President Macapagal-Arroyo(GMA) ranked third, followed by Sen. Panfilo Lacson who was ranked fourth by the environmentalists. Bro. Eddie Villanueva received the lowest ranking (gray) because of his failure to respond to the questionnaire despite repeated attempts by the GEI organizers to follow-up with his office. GEI evaluators interpret this to mean that the environment is not a priority concern for Villanueva.

Yellow

GMA received a low ranking because the environmental groups disapprove of her pro-GMO position and her administration's active promotion of mining. Furthermore, as the incumbent, she is burdened with a blemished track record that contradicts her statements on the various issues.

For all intents and purposes, the environmental agenda of FPJ, GMA and Lacson did not merit a green score and were only good for a dismal yellow rating in the eyes of the environmentalists.

None of the vice presidential candidates submitted individual stand on the issues raised, although the Roco and FPJ camps stressed that the responses of their presidential candidates reflected the party position.

Green senators

Among the senatorial candidates, only three bothered to reply to the GEI questionnaire—Aquilino Pimentel, Orlando Mercado and Robert Jaworski. All three have been associated with various green causes during their stints in the Senate like the total commercial logging ban and the Clean Air Act. For responding to the questionnaire, the three received brownie points from environmentalists who interpreted the move to mean that the environment would be a priority concern for them once elected.

However, Mercado's policy positions on all eight environmental issues stood out, making him the top choice for senator among the green groups.

A vote for a candidate who espouses green principles is a vote for the future. It is only right that this issue ranks high in the priorities of those aspiring for national office. The electorate also needs to know that the choices they make in May can spell the difference between a green or gray future for the country.

ILLUSTRATION BY STEPH BRAVO
PAGE DESIGN BY ERNIE SAMBO

Consumers unknowingly eat GMO products

By Beau Baconguis
Greenpeace Southeast Asia

Genetically modified organisms (GMOs) are not only a threat to the environment and to human health. Genetically engineered (GE) seeds also take away the right of farmers to plant non-GE seeds due to contamination. The absence of labelling and traceability systems take away the rights of consumers to know and to choose non-GMO products.

Despite calls from various sectors not to go ahead with the commercial production of GMOs, government still allowed it via Department of Agriculture Administrative Order No. 8. Eight months later, the first commercial planting of Bt corn began. Recently, 17 crops were allowed to be imported by the Bureau of Plant Industry for direct use in food, feed and processing. Filipino consumers, meanwhile, continue to be exposed to risks through the GE food that they eat unknowingly.

This backdrop became the context of the question for the candidates for national office. *What steps will you take to protect the country's biodiversity and public health from the contamination problems brought about by the release and use of GMOs in agriculture and food?*

Ms Macapagal sounded like she was talking to the wrong crowd—the genetic engineering industry instead of environmental groups. Her misfortune is that she already has a track record as president and therefore her rhetoric can be cross-checked with her performance. She boasted of DAO No.8 as an achievement when environmental groups see it as a direct threat to Philippine agriculture, biodiversity, food security and sovereignty, and rural livelihood.

Cartagena Protocol

She claimed to have signed the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety in December 2003, which gave her the lone point from the group that assessed her response. She would have gotten more points had she pushed hard enough for its ratification by the Senate. Other statements from GMA on risk assessment, biosafety, etc. came across as empty statements because it was during her administration that GMOs were heavily promoted and commercialized. On this issue, she got a gray rating.

A close look at the platform of Poe shows that outside the usual motherhood statements, he does have some specific plans concerning GMOs. The first is to support "proper labelling of and close monitoring of products." Labelling, especially when comprehensive and mandatory, allows consumers to reject GMOs. In relation to this, he mentioned a customs system to monitor transboundary movement of GMOs, which is consistent with the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety. The most important part of his response is the fact that he believes that increased food production can be achieved "without reliance on these (genetic engineering) technologies." For this, Poe received a green rating on the issue of GMOs.

Lacson plans to create a multisectoral committee in his first 100 days in office. This committee will be assigned to "determine the potential human health and environmental impact of GMOs in the Philippines." Further, this committee will be required to "recommend immediate steps to lessen the impact of GMOs." The more important statement in Lacson's response is the strong support for GMOs. The four points that he got puts him under a weak yellow presidency where GMOs are concerned.

Gray

While Villanueva was not able to send in his response to the questionnaire, he was given points for recognizing the need to exercise precaution by not allowing the introduction of anything that would harm the body and land and water systems. In his platform posted on his website, he was the first presidential candidate, who implied the precautionary approach. For this he was given two points which, unfortunately, still spells a gray presidency.

The most significant platform came from Roco. He was able to provide concrete and creative solutions to the problem of GMO release and contamination. He promised to put an immediate halt to the release and use of GMOs in agriculture and food, a call that various sectors have been making since the start of the field trials of Bt corn. He also recognizes the importance of community participation in decision-making through "appropriate and sufficient consultations with those who will and might be affected."

Burden of proof

Roco said that use and release of GMOs would only be allowed following extensive scientific proof that these were not harmful. Here, the burden of proof shifts to those who want to introduce GMOs unlike the current GMA position, which places the burden of proof of negative effects on the public. Roco also was creative enough to propose that GMO proponents be required to provide for "insurance coverage of people, flora and fauna, structures and the environment in general, in case harm or damage in form and extent will result from the use of such GMOs."

As an alternative to agriculture and food production using GMOs, he plans to promote organic farming technologies.

Lastly, he supports labelling by food manufacturers and processors. Because the principles espoused in formulating his platform were seen as dark green, Roco was given 10 points. Among all the candidates for president, his has the brightest prospects for the environment.

Support steps to conserve forests and alleviate poverty

By Ipat Luna
Philippine Greens

Community-based forest management (CBFM) and the 1987 Constitution resolved the previous decade's debate on total commercial log ban. The Constitution limits the means of resource exploitation to only three ways—directly by the state, through private joint venture with the state, and small-scale exploitation by marginal users.

Previous campaigns never intended a total ban on all logging, merely on private, large-scale commercial enterprise. It sidestepped the commercial log ban debate by favoring local, small-scale management, although large-scale commercial logging could still be done directly by the state or through joint ventures with private commercial entities. CBFM rightly frames the forest exploitation question from the perspective of democratic resource access by giving primary benefit from remaining resources to forest communities.

However, there has been high expectation of communities engaged in forest management. The granting of tenure over forest resources is expected to make them stewards delivering forest conservation to the rest of the population on a silver platter. They are supposed to gain livelihood from the resources. These considerable challenges, along with unsavory sectors using CBFM agreements to undertake large-scale commercial logging for private interests, have placed the policy under attack.

There is, therefore, a pressing need for the policy to be supported by the highest executive official of the land. The questions posed to the candidates were: *How will you enhance the implementation of the policy on community-based management of forests and in enforcement of laws against commercial logging? Do you agree that natural old growth forests should be kept free from commercial logging?*

The questions were premised on the soundness of the policy and required a response that commits to its continuation while supporting genuine steps to improve its implementation and deliver success in conservation and poverty alleviation.

Thankfully, all of the candidates for president appear to support the policy. But their responses also reflect whether such support will translate into successes on the ground.

Wood certification

The administration boasts of the CBFM program currently managing 5.7 million hectares, benefiting nearly half a million families. It rightly claims that stewardship requires that the socio-economic situation of the communities be enhanced, and claims to have responded with livelihood opportunities. This can be gleaned from the recent experience that tenure alone will not alleviate the situation and deliver conservation. Ms Macapagal also has the benefit of being able to claim credit for recent developments like the partnership with the Supreme Court and Integrated Bar of the Philippines in enforcement and prosecution as well as in efforts at wood certification.

Lacson, relies on effective law enforcement and mentions that sustainability is the key to enhance implementation. He does not elaborate on any operational systems or innovative interventions that would deliver it. He also says he will strengthen the institutional reforms to advance the roles of the local government unit (LGU) in CBFM but this is a double-edged sword as an LGU controlled by the local elite will undertake CBFM in a way that makes it a means for their own commercial exploitation—a double whammy for forest dwellers and not real empowerment for managing forest resources.

Poe's response relies on participatory local government. He mentions training and equipment for LGUs to operationalize CBFM but this suffers from the same problem. It will not cut it if the LGU is dominated by the local elite. The nuanced interventions required in making CBFM successful were not dealt with, leading us to conclude that if elected, the party may not be able to appoint an environment secretary that could deliver the goods on CBFM.

Tree farming

As for primary forests, his platform on delineation is sound and is in fact mandated by the Constitution, except that his examples of programs include small tree farming, joint ventures in tree farming, etc. These are actually no longer forests but farms. It was not clear whether these would supply the wood to keep natural forests free from plunder. As such, it does not sound like a direct measure that would relieve pressure on the resource base.

The response of Roco's Alyansa ng Pag-asa was rather intriguing. It promises a demarcation of the boundaries of all natural old growth forests within 30 to 60 days. It also promises to strengthen CBFM councils.

One of the major problems of CBFMs is that they are frequently granted to "peoples' organizations" comprising a very small percentage of the community-at large. As a result, large tracts of land are placed under the control and enterprising spirit of only a handful of community-members, not the community itself. This gives rise to numerous problems, from the incompetence of the handful of people speaking in behalf of the entire community to their acting as fronts for large-scale commercial interests. Roco's party promises to give logistical, technical and legal support to these councils. Whether they mean the peoples' organizations that are holders of the tenure instruments or something else remains to be seen. If these councils have wider representation within communities, this will be an appropriate response.

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Youth told vigilance key in vote counting

A YOUTH organization is asking supporters of President Macapagal-Arroyo to stay vigilant until the canvassing of votes in all precincts in Cebu City.

The Bigkis Pinoy chapter in Cebu City, represented by political officer Alvira Lampong, asked youth members to ensure victory for the President in the May 10 elections.

"Be wary not only during campaigns, but most especially during the canvassing of votes," she said in a statement.

She asked members to coordinate closely with one another and be brave to report any election irregularities.

"Always stay active until the end of the election process," she said.

She asked youth members to put words into action.

"This is for all of us, particularly the youth," she said.

Bigkis Pinoy is one of the members of the Progressive Organization for Genuine Leadership, Outstanding Reforms and Intelligent Action that spearheaded Biyaheng Gloria, a nationwide caravan to gather support for Ms Macapagal at the grassroots level.

Over 500 district coordinators in Cebu City have taken their oaths during ceremonies in Cebu City.

Alexander Cauigiran of the Pro-Gloria group inducted officers and more than 500 district coordinators of the movement's local chapter at the Cebu Business Hotel in Colon on April 17.

He said Pro-Gloria members are friends and acquaintances who coordinated with one another to manifest support for Ms Macapagal's presidency and translate their support into votes.

Banks won't let loan agency go to danger areas

DAVAO CITY—The partner banks of the Quedan and Rural Credit Guarantee Corp. (Quedancor) have threatened to withdraw their funds if the government-run financing group expands to conflict-affected areas in Mindanao.

Nelson Buenaflor, president and CEO of Quedancor, said that they have long proposed to enter some areas of the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM), parts of Central and Western Mindanao, but their partner banks would not allow them.

"Our partner banks say that if we will enter those areas, they will withdraw their money, maybe it will take some time before we can enter there," he told reporters here on Tuesday in connection with the 2004 Agri-Credit Week Celebration.

Buenaflor said they really have no choice but to follow the banks because their money constitute 80 percent of Quedancor's total loan portfolio of Quedancor on rediscounting lines.

The Land Bank of the Philippines (LBP) has the largest investment available for the rediscounting program at P1.2 billion. *Joel Escovilla, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

Gloria orders DA to distribute ₱500 discount cards to farmers

MS MACAPAGAL on the campaign trail at the South Luzon Polytechnic College in Lucban, Quezon.

PATRICK CASTILLO/PDI SOUTHERN LUZON BUREAU

SORSOGON CITY—President Macapagal-Arroyo instructed the Department of Agriculture in Bicol to facilitate the distribution of cards that would give P500 worth of discounts on farm products to farmers in the wake of increasing prices of farm inputs, particularly fertilizers.

During a Pulong ng Bayan in the provincial gymnasium here on Sunday, farmers expressed support for the full promotion and production of the Gloria Hybrid Rice, which yielded twice the amount of their previous harvests and provided them more income.

"We need to create a business-friendly atmosphere, environment and policies that will encourage more investors, especially foreign ones, to venture into business in our country thus resulting in more job generation," the President said.

"This is not just for the metropolitan areas or highly industrialized or commercialized areas but also in the countryside, where the present administration is also focusing its sight to fast track development," she added.

She said some P500 million of the P700 million from the coconut levy fund had been released for the development of the coconut industry and to cover life insurance for farmers amounting to P10,000 each.

The Philippine Coconut Authority (PCA) will facilitate the identification and enrolment of qualified farmers to the program and release funds to cover the benefits to be availed of by the farmers.

To be covered are farmers who till a maximum of five hectares of coconut farms and former members of the Philippine Coconut Federation.

More than 12,000 farmers in Sorsogon are already covered by the program according to the PCA.

In Lucban, Quezon on Wednesday, Ms Macapagal launched the "Botika sa Barangay" project, village drug stores that, she said, makes available cheap but quality medicine to the public.

She also led the groundbreaking ceremony for the completion of the Infanta-Marikina road and a concrete bridge on April 15. *Emir Emano Gamis and Delfin Mallari Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

SAMPLE of revolutionary wrath. The burned Victory Liner bus was reduced to a pile of ash and burned steel.

TOOTS SOBERANO/PDI NORTHERN LUZON BUREAU

NPA guerrillas continue bus-burning

DAGUPAN CITY—Suspected rebels torched a Baguio City-bound bus in Sison, Pangasinan, on Tuesday night after its owners reportedly failed to pay revolutionary taxes, police said.

None of the 49 passengers of the Victory Liner bus was hurt. Police said the suspects, who were among the passengers, asked the passengers to alight before ordering the bus driver, Heleno Caacbay, to bring the vehicle to a riverbed below the Agat Bridge here.

Senior Supt. Mario Sandiego, Pangasinan police director, said they were investigating reports that the New People's Army was behind the burning.

Sandiego said they were talking to the owners of Victory Liner to verify if they had received demands for payment of revolutionary taxes from the NPA.

On April 14, a Victory Liner bus bound for Manila was burned by suspected rebels in Jones, Isabela. No one was hurt in that attack.

Supt. Edgar Basbas, provincial police deputy director for operations, said one of the suspects, a woman, asked Caacbay to stop the bus before it reached the Agat Bridge near the border of Pangasinan and La Union at about 8:30 p.m. on Tuesday.

When the bus stopped, two male passengers seated at the back of the driver pointed a gun at him.

The woman's ticket showed she was bound for Sison. *Yolanda Sotelo-Fuertes, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

Suspect in lawyer's slay can't find legal counsel

BAGUIO CITY—The suspect in the murder of a Baguio lawyer has been hard put finding a lawyer. But that's because the members of the Integrated Bar of the Philippines in Baguio and Benguet have decided to prosecute suspect Reynaldo Hernando instead for the April 13 murder of lawyer Victoria Sturch, an IBP member.

Hernando, 29, was arrested inside the Baguio City police station, where he was waiting to testify in a case filed by his employer, a bar manager.

Lawyer Daniel Mangalay, IBP Baguio-Benguet president, said "lawyers are bound by the rule that they have to defend anyone regardless of whether they believe the individual to be guilty."

But Mangalay said he had offered his free services to the family of Sturch "and could no longer serve another client."

"That is my personal decision, but I offered this position to the IBP officers. One cannot be a lawyer for two conflicting clients so that addresses our ethical obligation (to Hernando)," he said.

Members of the Hernando family complained about their difficulty when murder charges were filed against the suspect on Monday.

Mangalay said, however, that Hernando is only one of several suspects whom the police had placed under surveillance.

"He was also represented by Armando Lawagan, a public attorney, when he was charged by (City Prosecutor Benedicto) Carantes," he said.

Two witnesses positively identified Hernando as the lone gunman who shot and killed Sturch on Harrison Road here.

Sturch, a corporate lawyer who survived a first slay attempt in September last year, was shot in the nape with a .25 cal. pistol. She died while being taken to the Baguio General Hospital and Medical Center.

Police sources said they videotaped their surveillance of Hernando, who works in a local pub, after identifying all of the people with whom Sturch had legal issues.

The witnesses were watching Hernando's surveillance tape when he walked into the police station.

Hernando is the son of a former employee of Sturch, who was involved in a labor case against the lawyer.

The INQUIRER learned that Sturc had lost the labor case and was c dered by the court to pay P200,0 to her employees, one of the Ernesto, the suspect's father.

The slain lawyer previousl identified her attacker to the p lice as someone who looked li the son of her former employee. police source said.

Police said Hernando was prev ously convicted for two attempt homicide cases. He was releas on probation in the first case, wh the second case is on appeal.

Hernando is detained at th Baguio city jail. *Vincent Cabre and Donna Demetillo, PD Northern Luzon Bureau*

Hearing of rape case vs John O postponed as venue change sought

TAGAYTAY CITY—The much-anticipated meeting of Sen. John Osmeña and his accuser did not materialize as the senator's lawyers requested a transfer of the venue of the preliminary investigation on the rape charge originally set yesterday at this city's prosecutor's office.

Assistant prosecutor Ernesto Vida said Osmeña's lawyer filed a motion before the Department of Justice on April 11 to reassign the preliminary investigation to the DOJ.

He said he received a copy of the motion on April 12.

Vida said although he has yet to get a copy of the approval, a staffer from the DOJ made a phone call to his office on Monday, informing him that the department had already granted Osmeña's request.

"But I will still wait for the formal approval from the DOJ before I let other courts get hold of all the documents and case folders pertaining to the case, which we are now readying," Vida told the INQUIRER.

Osmeña is facing a rape charge filed by Diego Gomez, 24, a confessed sex worker, accusing him of raping Gomez in a rest house somewhere in Tagaytay last Feb. 5.

Osmeña's lawyer cited two reasons for their request of transfer.

First, the respondent argued that it would be convenient for him and the complainant to attend the hearings at the DOJ since they both indicated their addresses as within the city.

Gomez listed his home address as Leveriza, Pasay, which was later found to be fictitious.

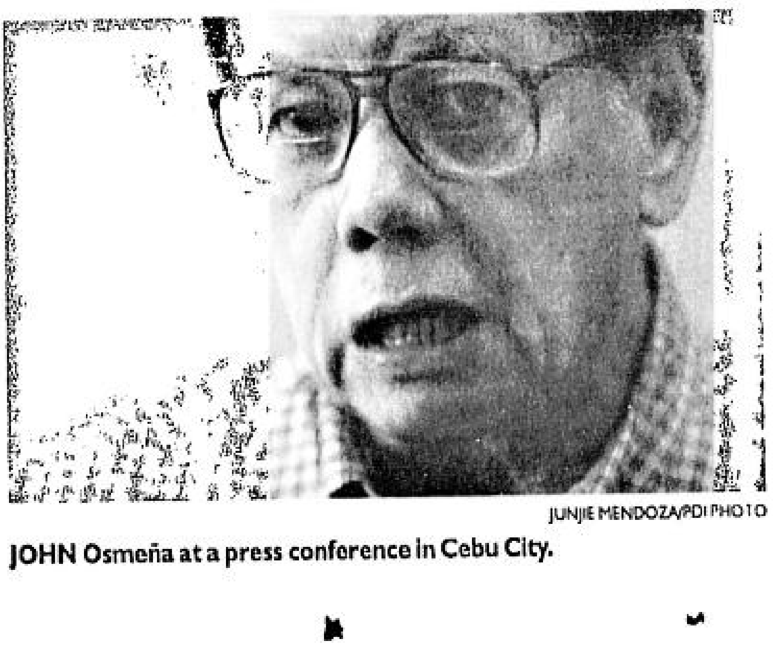
Second, Osmeña accused Vida of "bias and partiality" in handling the case. The senator claimed that the prosecutor instructed and advised Gomez to elevate his complaint from "acts of lasciviousness to rape."

Vida promptly dismissed Osmeña's allegations and denied that he was biased against the senator.

He said Gomez's affidavit and complaint sheet were already prepared when the complainant and witnesses came to his office on March 31.

Vida said he initially set five preliminary hearings on the case, which would run within the 60-day period mandated by law.

He said neither Gomez nor his lawyers had come to his office as of late yesterday afternoon. *Marlon Ramos, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*



JUNJIE MENDOZA/PDI PHOTO

JOHN Osmeña at a press conference in Cebu City.

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INQUIRER Southern Luzon

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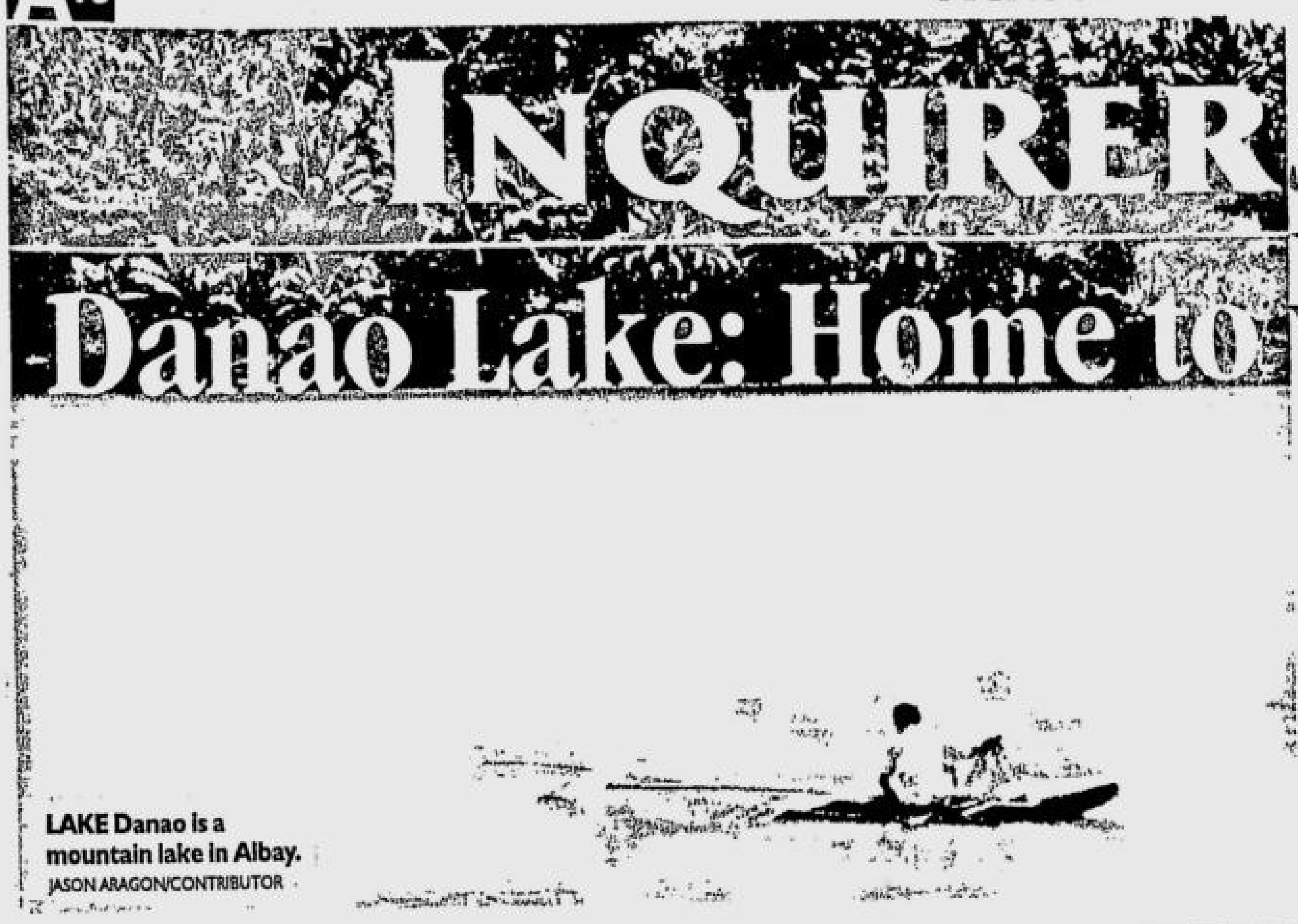
Danao Lake: Home to world's tiniest fish



LAKE Danao is a mountain lake in Albay.
JASON ARAGON/CONTRIBUTOR

By Gil Francis G. Arevalo
Polangui, Albay

IN THE 1900s, a marine scientist refuted the claim of the Guinness Book of World Records that the world's smallest fish was the *Pandaca pygmaea* (dwarf pygmy goby).

Dr. Hugh M. Smith, a marine scientist of Georgetown University in the United States who had been in the Philippines for 15 years, said the smallest fish was the *sinarapan* of Lake Buhi.

Since his finding, no one, even among Albayanos, had ever thought that there was even another fish smaller than the 7-millimeter-long sinarapan.

The fish, called *tabios*, is about 5 to 6 mm long and could only be found in Danao Lake, a mountain lake located between Barangays Quinarabasahan in Malinao town and Maypiña in Polangui.

The late Prof. Ramon Salire of the Bicol University Extension Services accidentally discovered tabios on Sept. 15, 1989. At that time, he already believed that it was the smallest fish in the world, dwelling in the lake that he mistakenly identified as a lagoon.

His claim during that time, however, had not merited attention until such time that the people of Polangui and some foreign explorers realized that his claim was true and people from other parts of the region, including Lake Buhi, started to attest to Salire's claim.

Later on, Smith gave tabios the scientific name *Mistichtys luzonensis*, which means "smallest fish in Luzon."

Location

Only about 15 hectares in size, Danao Lake is enclosed by Mt. Masaraga, Mt. Malinao and Mt. Mayon, all in Albay. It is about 20 km from Polangui town proper and 58 km away from Legazpi City.

The lake offers a panoramic view of the lowland towns of Albay and Camarines Sur provinces, and a taste of lush vegetation, invigorating atmosphere and pollution-free air.

The Civil Defense Management Council of Polangui said Danao Lake can produce more than 100 to 300 kilos of tabios a day, which are sold in the market for up to P120 or P150 a kilo in other parts of Albay.

Unlike Lakes Makuwaw, San Ramon and Buhi in Buhi town, Danao Lake is considered by the Department of Tourism as unexplored.

On Sept. 29, 1989, one year after it was discovered, Danao Lake was featured in a national daily, but explorers considered it as just another isolated lagoon in Albay. It was not even mentioned that tabios was abundant in the lake.

Beauty, abundance

"It could be this reason why since the late 1950s, from the time it became publicly known here in Polangui, up to this day, residents near the lake really exclusively enjoyed its scenic beauty and the abundance of tabios," said Tom Rosales, Polangui municipal secretary and Civil Defense Management Council coordinator.

Crayfish, carp, tilapia, catfish, talisog, milk fish and freshwater eels also abound in Lake Danao, said Barangay Danao head Arnulfo Caña, who has been living near Danao Lake for almost 54 years now.

There are also weeds, which, local folk say, are used as alternative for *kangkong* (swamp cabbage).

"Most of the people in our barangay, about 750 residents, depend much on fishing for livelihood; that's why we really treasure this lake because of the abundance of tabios and other graces that it endows upon us. This might be just a small lake but it has helped most, if not all people here in their day-to-day living," Caña said.

What also makes Danao Lake unexplored is that few residents have dived deep into the lake's bottom, which, those who have dared try said, paints a picturesque scenery of its exquisite beauty.

Caña also revealed that cut pieces of "apitong" wood were found at the lake's bottom. Apitong is used as material to build houses.

"Old timers here said Danao Lake used to be surrounded by so many huge trees that only a small portion of the blue sky could be seen when you were in the lake. But these trees were felled and swept away when the lake was hit by a very turbulent tornado," Caña said.

Rosales confirmed that the presence of apitong could be attributed to the rich flora in the place. And that the alleged turbulent tornado could be considered only as an urban legend, he said.

Most residents near Lake Danao believe that the presence of apitong can also be ascribed to the productive land and water resources of the area.

Water source

Lake Danao is the main source of potable water of upland Polangui residents. "If the water level in Danao is low, the water supply in our reservoir is very much affected. But this only happens during summer," Rosales said.

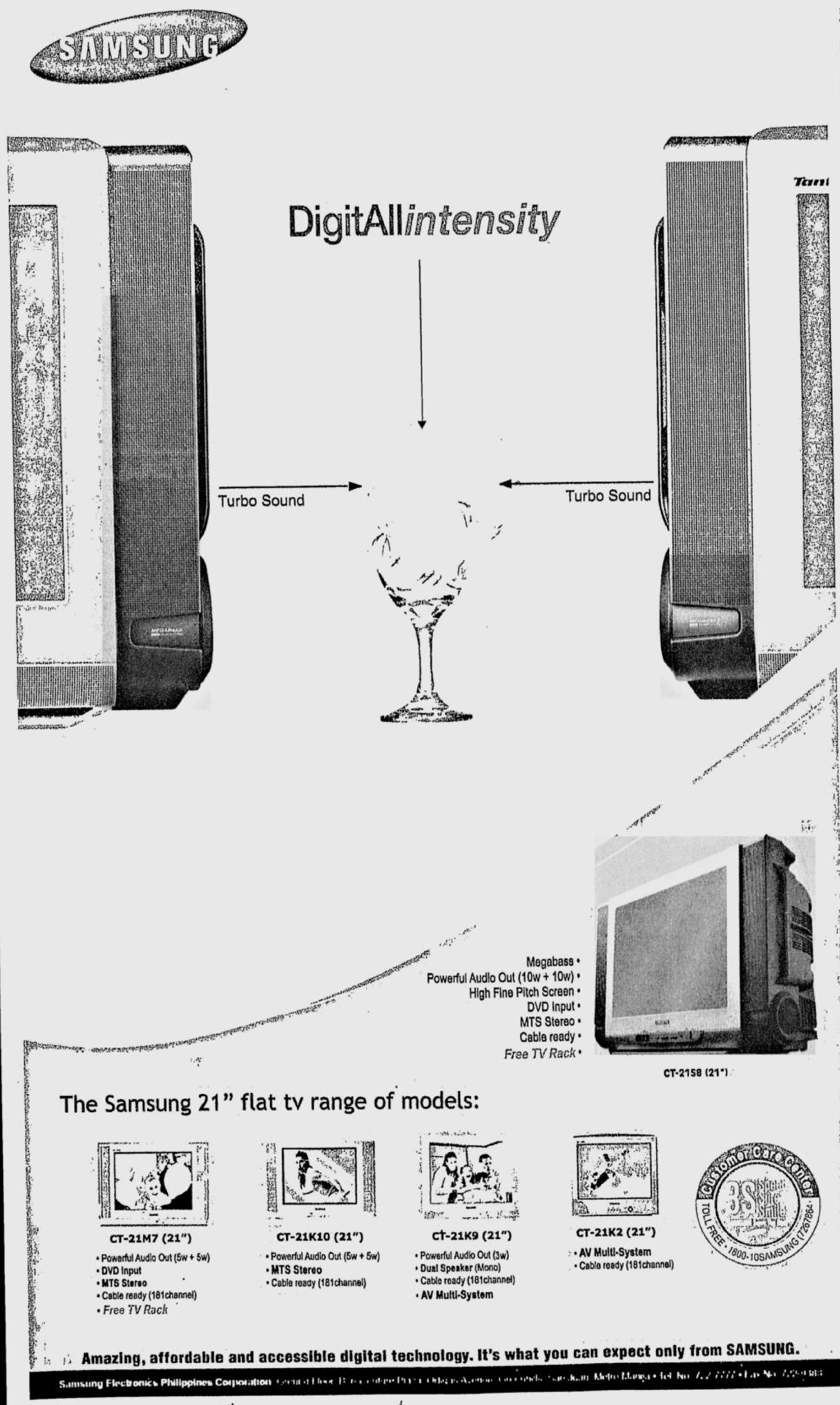
Residents brag of safety in the place. In fact, it serves as a sanctuary for them in times of storm and typhoon, since Lake Danao is also strategically enclosed by three big known mountains in the border of Albay and Camarines Sur.

Rosales said that the sinarapan in Lake Buhi has been considered extinct. In 2000, about 30 to 70 percent of sinarapan died. He fears that one day people, especially fishermen, will come to Lake Danao for its tabios and other fish.

"Of course, we are not against too many people who want to visit Danao Lake, since it has been now the sanctuary of the smallest fish in the world and it has now been one of the projected tourist destinations. But we will not let them exploit this place just for the sake of it," Rosales said.

What bothers the people of Polangui, however, is that Danao Lake, though considered an extinct volcano, still emits sulfuric acid and residues in the lake from time to time.

But Rosales said the Department of Environment and Natural Resources has assured them that Danao Lake has no more potential to explode. The sulfuric acid emission is but natural since the Lake is situated near Mayon Volcano.



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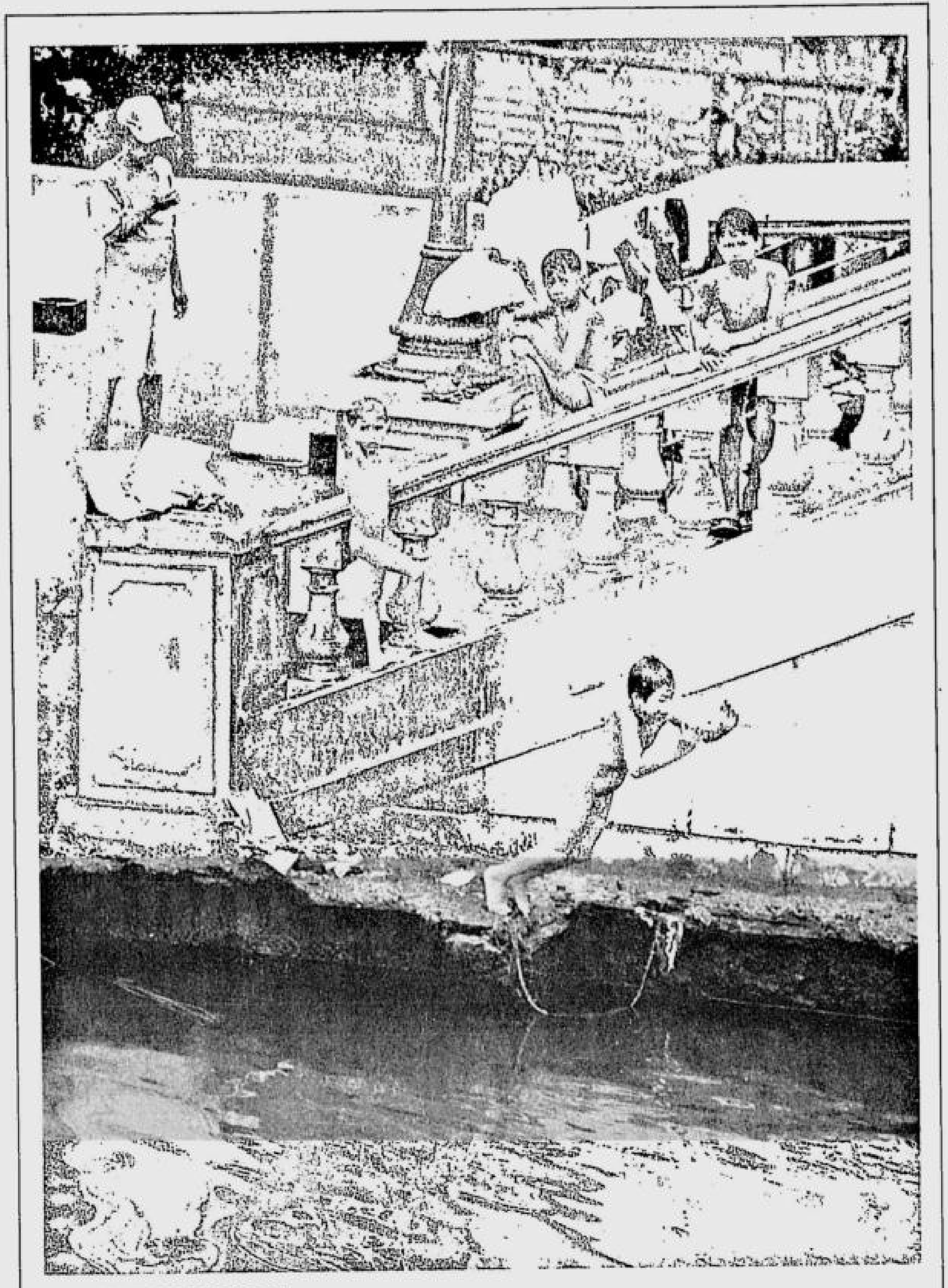
Laborers press for ₱65 hike in wages



DAREDEVIL PLUNGE
A boy braces for impact as he jumps into the murky waters of the Pasig River, which has been classified by the environment department as dead because of pollution. For many boys in Manila, a dip in the river is the only refreshing thing for them this summer. JOEL NITO/AFP

By Leila B. Salaverria

NINE days before Labor Day, a broad coalition of labor groups trooped to Malacañang to press for a P65 wage increase for workers in the private sector.

Around 150 members of the Broad Alliance for Wage Increase (Bawi) tried to march to Malacañang at about 11 a.m. yesterday to demand for salary hikes in both private and public sectors.

Letter for President

Around five Bawi leaders, headed by its spokesperson Daniel Edralin from the Alliance of Progressive Labor, were allowed to proceed to the Palace to submit their letter to the President.

In the letter, which was signed by the leaders of the 20 labor groups that form Bawi, the coalition stressed its call for a P65 increase in the daily wage of private sector employees and a P3,500 raise for government workers.

Bawi also asked the government to shoulder the workers' payments of the withholding tax and the SSS, GSIS and Pag-Ibig contributions.

Hard pressed

In a statement, Edralin said workers were already hard pressed trying to make do with their meager salaries.

"The minimum wage has been eroded many times since the last round of wage adjustments two years ago because of the steep rise in the prices of oil and basic goods," he said.

Primo Amparo of Makabayan, another Bawi member, also said in a statement that the P280 a day earnings of a 25-day worker are not enough to support a family with an average of six members because they actually need P562 a day to survive.

During their demonstration, the rallyists managed to march from Legarda Street to the main gate of San Beda College along the Chino Roces Bridge before they were stopped by gun-wielding members of the Western Police District Swat team.

Back to Legarda

Leody de Guzman of the Bukluran ng Manggagawang Pilipino was seen and heard asking the group to stop marching because the police were already blocking their way.

"*Umurong tayo ng kaunti, mga kasama* (Let's move back a bit)," de Guzman told his fellow Bawi members.

No violence occurred.

₱150-M civil suit filed vs 'Kabayan'

By Tarra Quismundo

DE CASTRO

A MAN identified as a former multi-millionaire filed yesterday a P150-million civil suit against K4 vice presidential candidate Noli de Castro.

"I am just asking for their help for me to clear my name, which they destroyed, and help me get back my children, who are still angry at me," said Rafael Engle, who was detained for seven years at the Manila City Jail on an accusation that he kidnapped his wife.

Engle, a former English teacher and singer in Japan who later owned with his wife several bars and restaurants in Manila, blamed his downfall on an episode of De Castro's "Magandang Gabi Bayan" (MGB).

According to Engle's lawyer Alex Avisado, the MGB episode was "vicious, wicked... wherein they portrayed our client as the person who was responsible for the kidnapping of his wife."

Engle alleged that the MGB crew asked for P2 million from him when they came to interview him about the disappearance of his wife on Aug. 12, 1995. Engle refused.

On the last Saturday of September 1995, when the episode was aired, Engle saw the episode where, he said, he appeared as the mastermind in his wife's disappearance.

He was charged in court and detained.

Since 1995, Engle has not seen his kids, Ralph Oliver, now about 16, and Stephanie, turning 13. They have been in the care of his wife's family said Engle.

Engle also believes that his wife is still alive and asked for her to come out. He had been separated from her before her disappearance.

"He lost everything. He is now bankrupt all because of that one episode," said Avisado.

Lawyer Jesse Andres, spokesperson and counsel of De Castro, branded the claims of Engle as "recycled propaganda."

In fact, Andres pointed out, they already filed a libel case against Engle for claiming that the senator tried to extort P2 million from him.

"This is obviously a desperate move on their part," De Castro's lawyer said in a faxed statement.

He explained, "I am referring to Mr. Engle and the politicians behind his black propaganda against Kabayan."

All that Patricia Mae, Keith and Vj wish for is to live longer

By Tarra Quismundo

PATRICIA MAE

KEITH

VJ

SHE COULD not help but shed tears whenever her first born cried of pain.

"She would tell me (in baby words): Mama, *ayaw na! Sait-sait* (Mama, please stop. It's so painful)," said Maurice Sarmiento, relating how her daughter complained of pain, in a weak voice and broken words.

But Patricia Mae, her 2-and-a-half-year-old girl, had always been more tolerant to pain than kids her age, said Maurice.

That was until she grew weak, frail and yellow.

Patricia Mae is suffering from biliary atresia, a disease caused by the absence of bile ducts in her liver.

Her disease has prevented bile, a liver secretion that contains cholesterol, salts and waste products, from being drained from her liver, slowly corroding it.

The lack of adequate bile flow has stunted Patricia Mae's growth, making her bones so brittle that even standing up is risky.

At 4 months old, Patricia Mae was diagnosed with the rare disease.

"The doctors said that she has to undergo surgery within six months, or else she might die," said teary-eyed Maurice.

Doctors told Maurice that the transplant should have been done before she turned 3 months, when the chances for a successful surgery was more likely.

The surgery would cost P3 million. Through the six months following this, Patricia Mae would have to take maintenance medicine that would cost P80,000 monthly.

But Patricia Mae's parents, both contractual employees in a fastfood chain, could not afford the liver transplant.

Maurice is still searching for strangers who could help.

Kind hearts who want to help put Patricia through her surgery can contact Maurice Sarmiento at (0918)382-7498. Donations can also be deposited under BPI account no. 8416-0209-54.

Like Patricia, 10-month-old Vj Gwyn Meode and year-old Keith Valenzuela, are both afflicted with biliary atresia and need P3 million for the operation.

Donations for Vj can be sent to the BPI bank account of Ronaldo Meode with account number 8685-0257-88. The family can also be reached at P-1 Imadejas Sta. Cruz, Butuan City or through (085) 342-5423 and cellphone number (0919)856-9658.

Keith's family can be reached at Damayang Lagi, E. Rodriquez Sr., Quezon City or through (0918)247-0240. Donations can also be sent to Hedeliza Torre's Metrobank account no. 504946 361 006481 0 000.

Interested donors can also contact the LIFT Babies Foundation Inc. at telephone no. (632) 824-4621 or mobile number (0918)926-3237. *With Jo Uy*

That Susan Roces punch

ON TARGET

Ramon Tulfo

ROXAS City vice mayoral bet Allan Celino should not complain of being punched by Susan Roces in public because he had it coming.

Celino said Roces, wife of presidential candidate Fernando Poe Jr., mistook his pats on her several times for something else. He said his pats were innocent on Roces as they were to remind her to wave back at people who were waving at her.

Hu, nagpapalusot ka lang, Celino!

A woman has a built-in antenna to know whether a man's touch is innocent or filled with malice.

Apparently, Celino's touch on Roces was malicious even if, on the surface, it looked innocent.

* * *

Celino is making a big fuss out of the punching incident to make people sympathize with him.

How low can the guy get, capitalizing on his libido that was repressed by a lady's punch!

Let's see if the voters of Roxas City would buy his gimmick.

* * *

Candidates would do anything, even sell their souls to the devil, just to get elected.

Some would dance on stage during a campaign rally. Others would sing or recite a poem like an elementary school pupil. Still others would do the unthinkable like doing a karate exhibition.

They make fools of themselves while they woo voters. But when they get elected they fool the people.

* * *

Former President Erap says that his sex life at his jail in Tanay is "zero."

In short, *hindi siya nakakascore.*

But withhold your sympathy, dear readers, because he was play-acting, as in the movies. In Tagalog, *nagpapakaawa effect si* Erap.

My sources among his guards told friends, who told me, that different mistresses visit the former president in his Tanay jail. These same mistresses also visited him when he was confined at the Veteran Memorial Hospital.

Erap can't live without sex. He'd die if he didn't have any.

* * *

A source close to the Estradas told me that the visits of Erap's mistresses to the Veterans Memorial Hospital was a source of quarrels between Erap and son Jinggoy, who was detained with him at the time.

Jinggoy took offense at the visits apparently because he sympathized with his mother, Sen. Loi Ejercito.

But despite Jinggoy's protests, the "conjugal" visits of Erap's mistresses continued.

If Erap could not be stopped by Jinggoy from heeding the "call of nature," how much more now that his son is already not with him?

* * *

Why does the Supreme Court continue to dignify the candidacy of Eddie Gil after he was disqualified by the Commission on Elections?

This guy is a nuisance candidate and he's running for president to get publicity.

He claims to have $10 billion deposited at the ING Bank, but he can't even buy a decent toupee. The toupee he's wearing looks like a mop.

The high court should take to heart a Tagalog saying: *"Ang pumapatol sa loko-loko ay mas loko-loko."*

Mayoral bet…

From page A18

Businessman Reynaldo Patacsil, Villar's rival, and Enrico Lopez were found guilty of 13 counts of estafa and simple estafa after they defrauded the investors of at least $42,000 through their firm Bestway/Belkin Management Consultancy, said State Prosecutor Peter Ong.

The victims gave their money to the firm for investment in foreign currency trading but they never saw these funds again. Patacsil and Lopez allegedly failed to return the money and its interest despite the investors' repeated demands.

40 years only

Makati Judge Manuel Victorio found the two businessmen guilty of seven counts of estafa, each of which carries a penalty of 10 to 20 years in prison, and five counts of simple estafa, which carry a prison term of four to 11 years.

However, Ong said the two convicts would serve only around 40 years in prison under the rules on criminal cases. Patacsil and Lopez also could still appeal their case.

Victorio had cleared them of charges that Bestway operated without the proper license from the Securities and Exchange Commission.

Transport strike bid hit

From page A18

Maranan said Fejodap and its 250,000 members nationwide, would wait for the decision on their appeal for a P1.50 fare hike.

"We are not joining them. We have been given discounts in gas stations, and an adjusted fare matrix. What are they looking for, trouble?" said Maranan.

Following the wave of transport strikes early last March, the Land Transportation, Franchising and Regulatory Board (LTFRB) gave jeepney drivers a P2 discount on each liter of diesel in several stations in Metro Manila, said Maranan.

Those in the provinces were given a discount of P1.

The fare system was also adjusted, and commuters now pay P4 for every four kilometers, with an additional P0.75 for every subsequent kilometer.

Commuters used to be charged P4 for the first five kilometers of their jeepney ride.

Meanwhile, the fare hike petition is pending. Maranan said that they are expecting a decision before the elections.

Maranan said that Fejodap and other transport groups submitted a position paper to the LTFRB yesterday.

The paper stated proof that a fare hike was needed, including the rising prices in jeepney spare parts.

Dy-Liacco; 17

MARIO NANO DY-LIACCO peacefully joined his Creator on April 20, at the age of 17.

His loving parents Peewee and Fe, brothers Biboy and Dino, grandmothers Lola Pat and Lola Nena, uncles and aunties Tito Nol, Tita Vilma, Tito Danny and Tita Joy, Tita Agnes, Papa Dennis, Papa Dondi and Mama Ellen, Papa Ike, Papa Raul, Mama Lau and Papa Rico, cousins Kate, Christian, Carlo, Manay Michelle, Manay Celine, Bea, Samantha, Ian and Andreanna request relatives, friends and pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His body lies in state at the Sta. Rita de Cascia Parish, Philam Homes, Quezon City. Cremation will be on Saturday, April 24 at the Eternal Gardens after the 7:30 a.m. Mass.

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(In exact order)

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METRO

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Editor **Abelardo S. Ulanday**

Transport strike bid hit

By Tarra Quismundo

THE HEAD of a major organization of jeepney drivers and operators has criticized plans for a new transportation strike that will seek to push for a fare hike.

Zenaida Maranan, national chairperson of the Federation of Jeepney Operators and Drivers Association of the Philippines, Inc., (Fejodap), said a transport strike at this time was not necessary.

"We don't know what's going on. We are wondering why they are planning another strike," Maranan said Tuesday.

Reports said that transport groups are planning to hold a transport strike anew.

TRANSPORT/A17

DELAYED RESPONSE TO ROBBERY

CPD blames bank execs

By Tina Santos

THE DIRECTOR of the Central Police District Office blamed bank officials yesterday for the alleged delay in their response to the robbery at a Quezon City bank on Monday.

"In fairness to my men, they quickly respond anytime bank alarms (that are connected to police stations) ring," Chief Supt. Napoleon Castro said.

He added, "But how can they do that when bank security personnel or employees push that (alarm) button only after the perpetrators of the crime have already escaped?"

Apparently, Castro said, bank personnel were instructed to do that to prevent a fire fight between suspects and lawmen.

"(Bank officials) would rather allow the suspects to get away with the money than let anybody get hurt in a gun battle," the police director explained.

The INQUIRER learned that banks in Quezon City have alarms connected to the CPD Headquarters in Sikatuna Village.

Police at the headquarters are the first to be alerted by the alarm and these in turn radio the nearest station for a response.

On Monday, five armed suspects, including a woman, robbed the Asiatrust Bank on E. Rodriguez Avenue, Barangay Mariana, which was about 50 meters from a community precinct of the CPD Galas station.

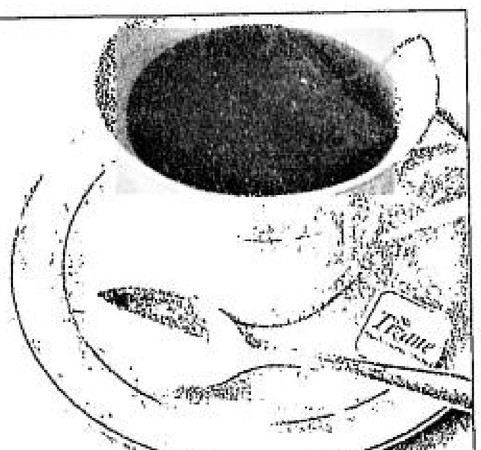
The suspects fled by flagging down a passenger jeepney after the 10-minute robbery.

The incident prompted National Capital Region Police Office (NCRPO) chief Director Ricardo de Leon to order an inquiry.

Castro said the CPD's own District Intelligence and Investigation Division would also be looking into the delayed response time of members of the Galas Station headed by Supt. Renato Valebia.

It was the second big armed robbery involving banks in Quezon City this month.

Two weeks ago, 15 armed men engaged security guards in a gun battle as they robbed an armored van at the SM Annex in North Edsa. CPD policemen also arrived late during that incident.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Asan na ba ang voters' list?

Boboto ba uli ang mga patay? Hindi pa nailabas ang updated voters' list, pero mukhang puwede na naman, ayon sa Namfrel. Teka, handa na ba talaga ang Comelec para sa darating na halalan? Ang sagot nina Comelec chairman Benjamin Abalos, Sen. Nene Pimentel, Namfrel chairman Joe Concepcion, election expert Romy Makalintal, at INQUIRER columnist Rina David. Ngayon alas-10 ng gabi, sa InqTV on ABC. (May replay bukas, alas-8 ng umaga.)

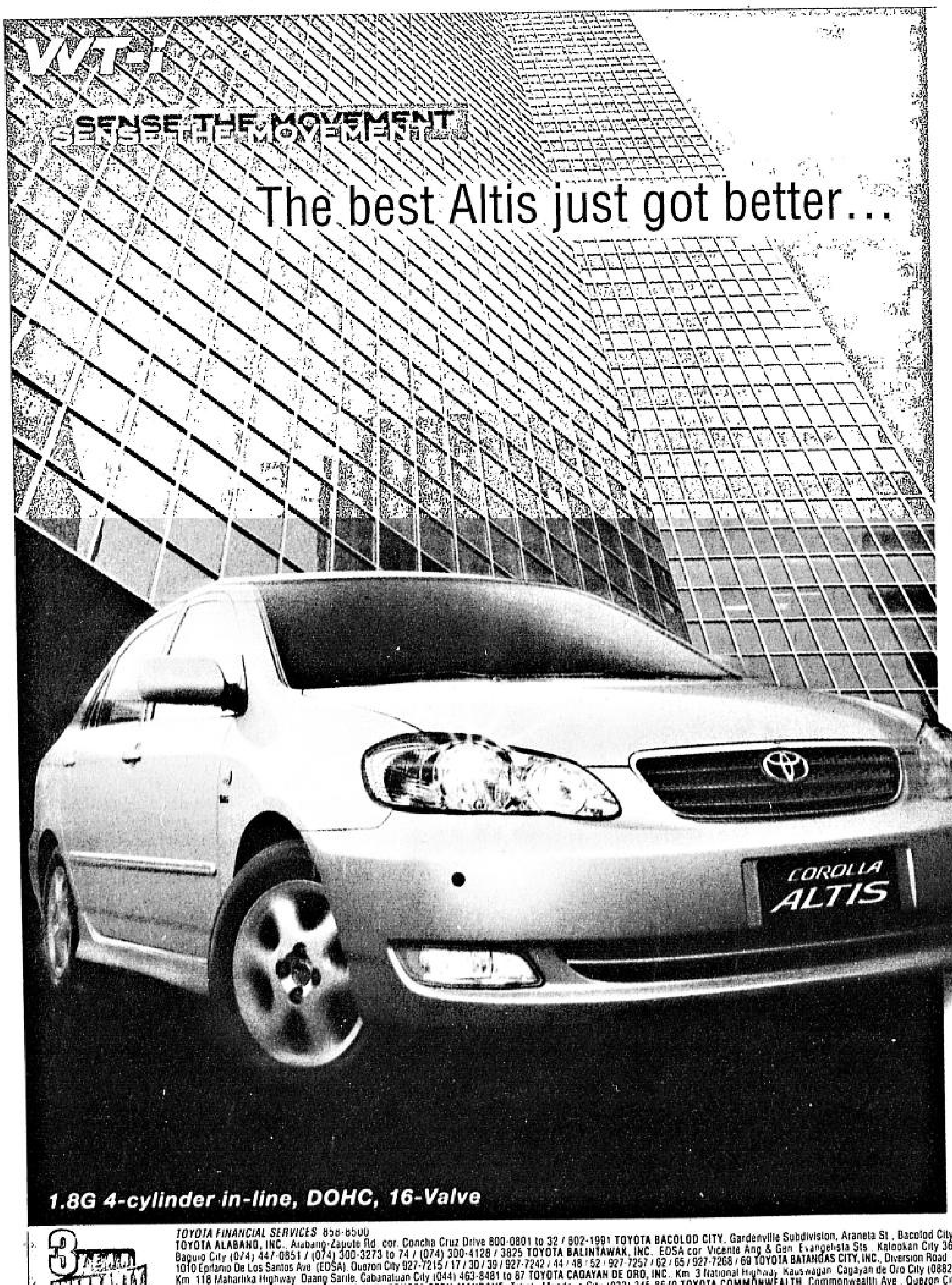
ABC

Mayoral bet gets century in jail

By Philip Tubeza

A MAKATI court has sentenced a rival of Las Piñas Rep. Cynthia Villar in the 2001 elections and his accomplice to more than 100 years in prison for defrauding three investors of at least more than P2 million in a foreign currency trading scheme, the Department of Justice said yesterday.

MAYORAL/A17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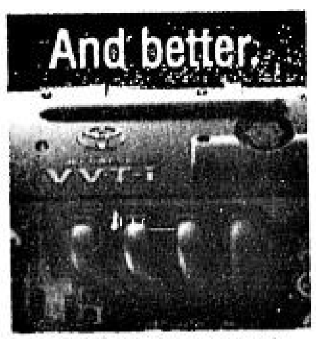

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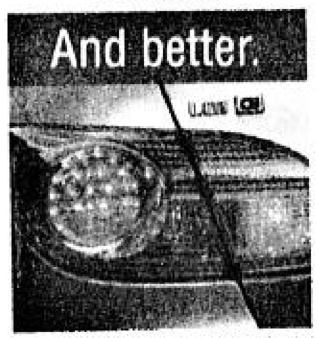

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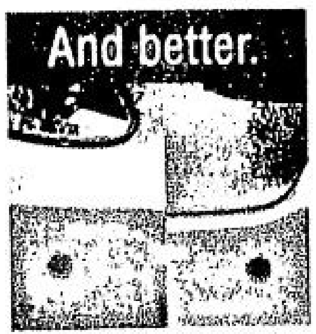

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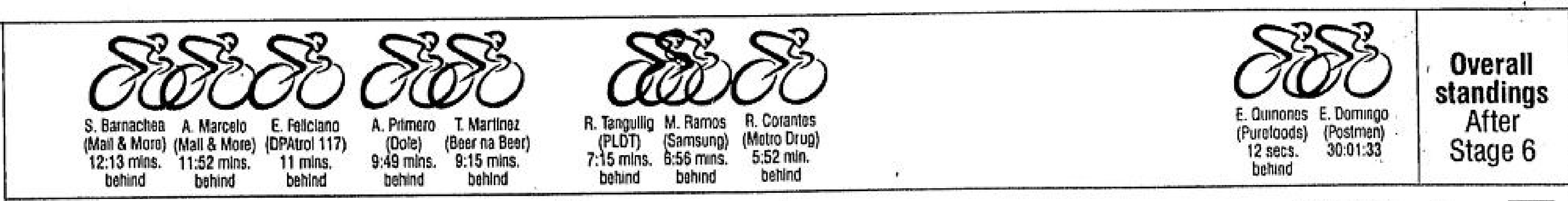
BASKETBALL: 2004 NBA Playoffs-Bucks vs Pistons, Game 2, Eastern First Round; 7 a.m. (r-10 p.m.); Heat vs Hornets, Game 2, Eastern First Round; 8 p.m. IBC 13—Milwaukee seeks to steal home court advantage against Detroit while Miami tries to torch the Hornets for the second time in a row.

TENNIS: Masters Monte Carlo; 9 a.m. (r), 4 p.m., 8 p.m. and 10 p.m.; Star Sports

Schedules subject to change without prior notice.



Overall standings After Stage 6

S. Barnachea (Mail & More) 12:13 mins. behind
A. Marcelo (Mail & More) 11:52 mins. behind
E. Feliciano (DPAtrol 117) 11 mins. behind
A. Primero (Dole) 9:49 mins. behind
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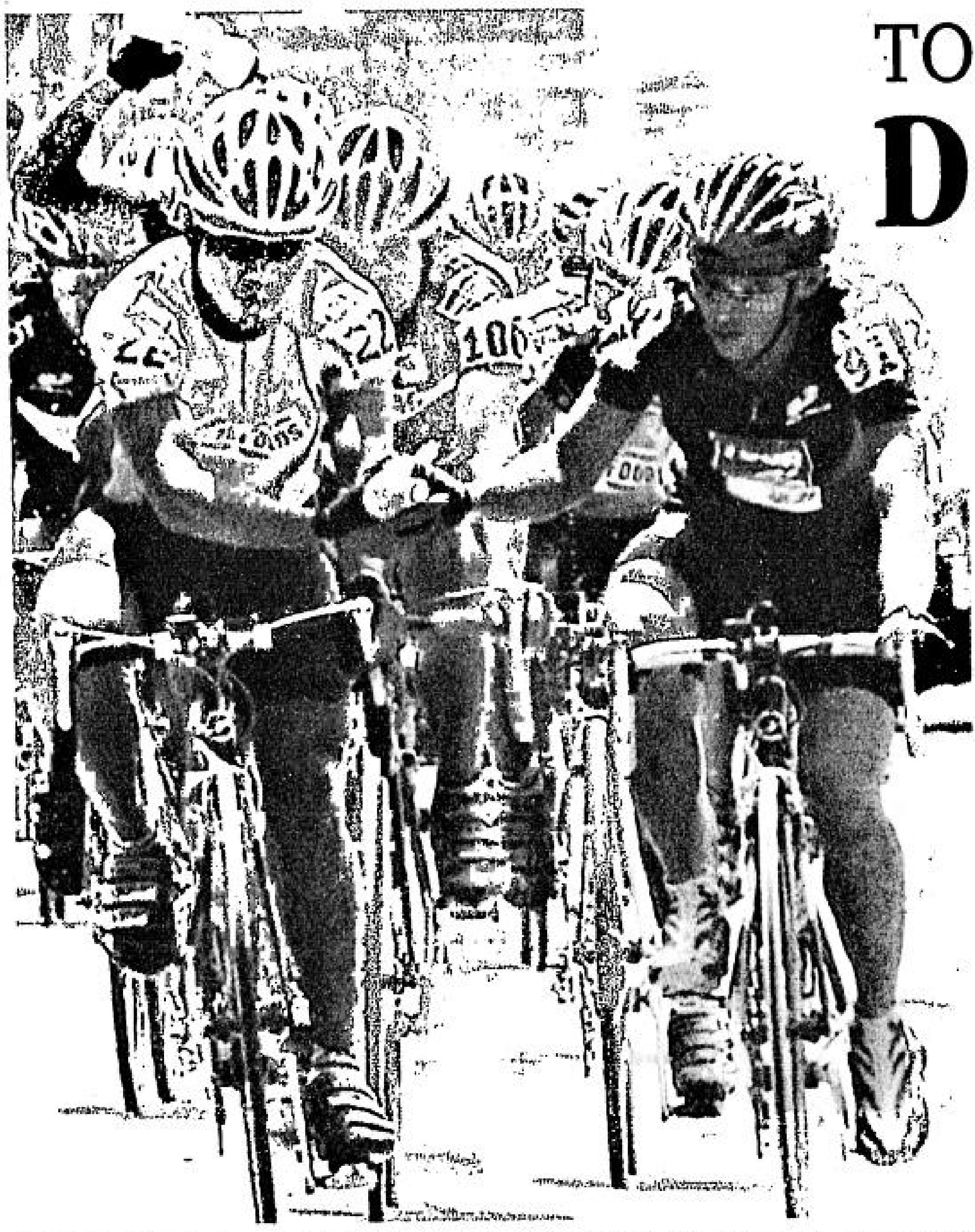
R. Corantes (Metro Drug) 5:52 min. behind
E. Quinones (Purefoods) 12 secs. behind
E. Domingo (Postmen) 30:01:33

AIR21 STUDIO 23 DZMM RADYO PATROL SAIS TRENTA
2004 TOUR PILIPINAS PRESENTED BY AIR21
FedEx Mail & More TANDUAY Beer na Beer PLDT SAMSUNG PUREFOODS Dole Maramon Drysdale Medical Products, Inc. METRO DRUG, INC. PATROL 117 DILG RAT RIDERS POSTMEN DOLC

TOUR PILIPINAS

Domingo grabs lead

By Marc Anthony Reyes



DOMINGO (91) takes a bottled water offered by Eusebio Quiñones as the lead pack hits Sual, Pangasinan.

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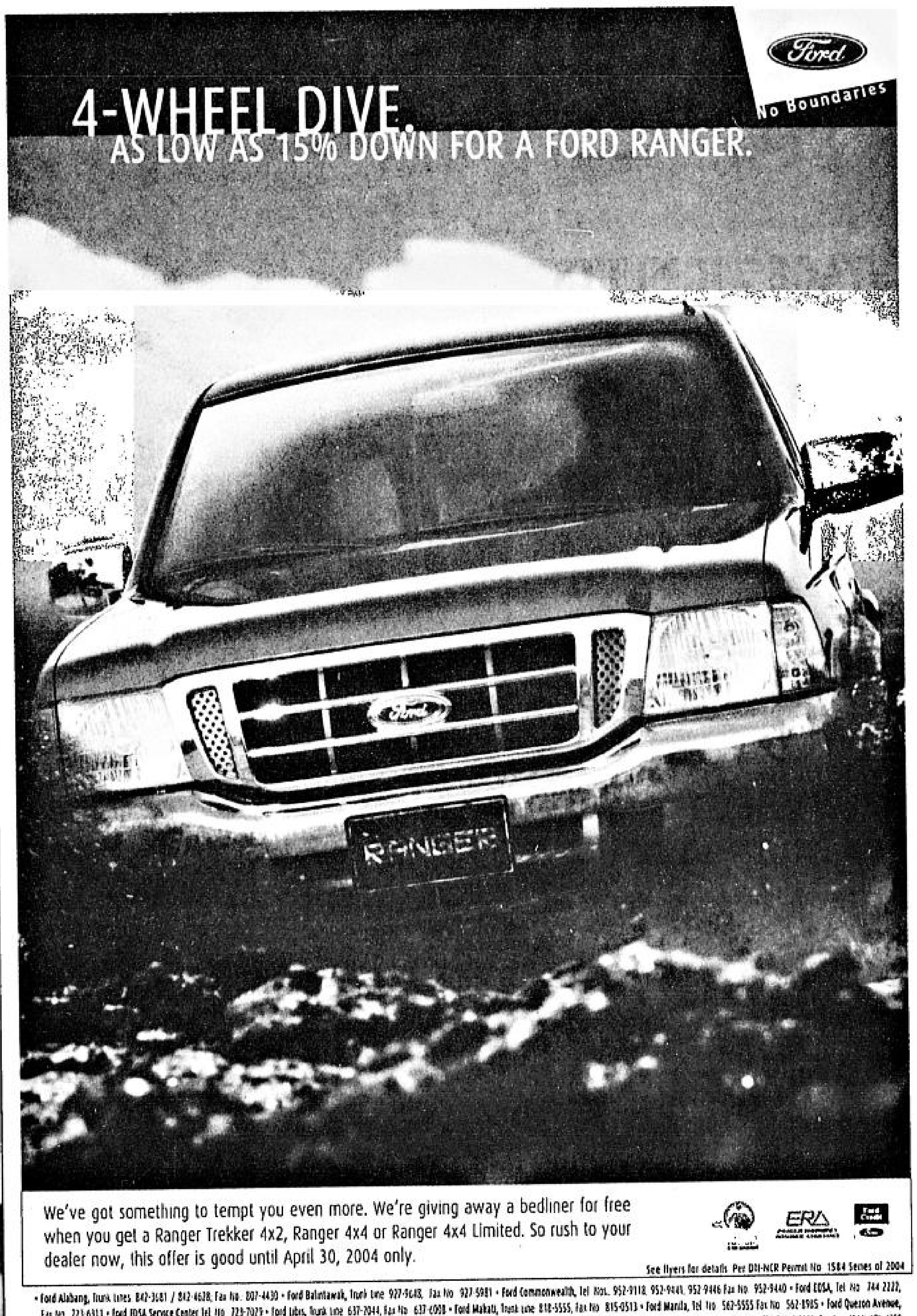

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Editor **Teddyvic S. Melendres**
Assistant Editor **Edwin M. Villanueva**

SPORTS TV

Compiled by L. Manguiat

BASKETBALL: 2004 NBA Playoffs-Bucks vs Pistons, Game 2 Eastern First Round; 7 a.m. (r-10 p.m.), Heat vs Hornets, Game 2, Eastern First Round; 8 p.m. IBC 13—Milwaukee seeks to steal home court advantage against Detroit while Miami tries to torch the Hornets for the second time in a row.

TENNIS: Masters Monte Carlo; 9 a.m. (r), 4 p.m., 8 p.m. and 10 p.m.; Star Sports

Schedules subject to change without prior notice.

AIR 21

STUDIO 23

DZMM RADYO PATROL SAIS TRENTA

Overall standings After Stage 6

2004 TOUR

Rider	Team	Time
S. Barnachea	(Mail & More)	12:13 mins. behind
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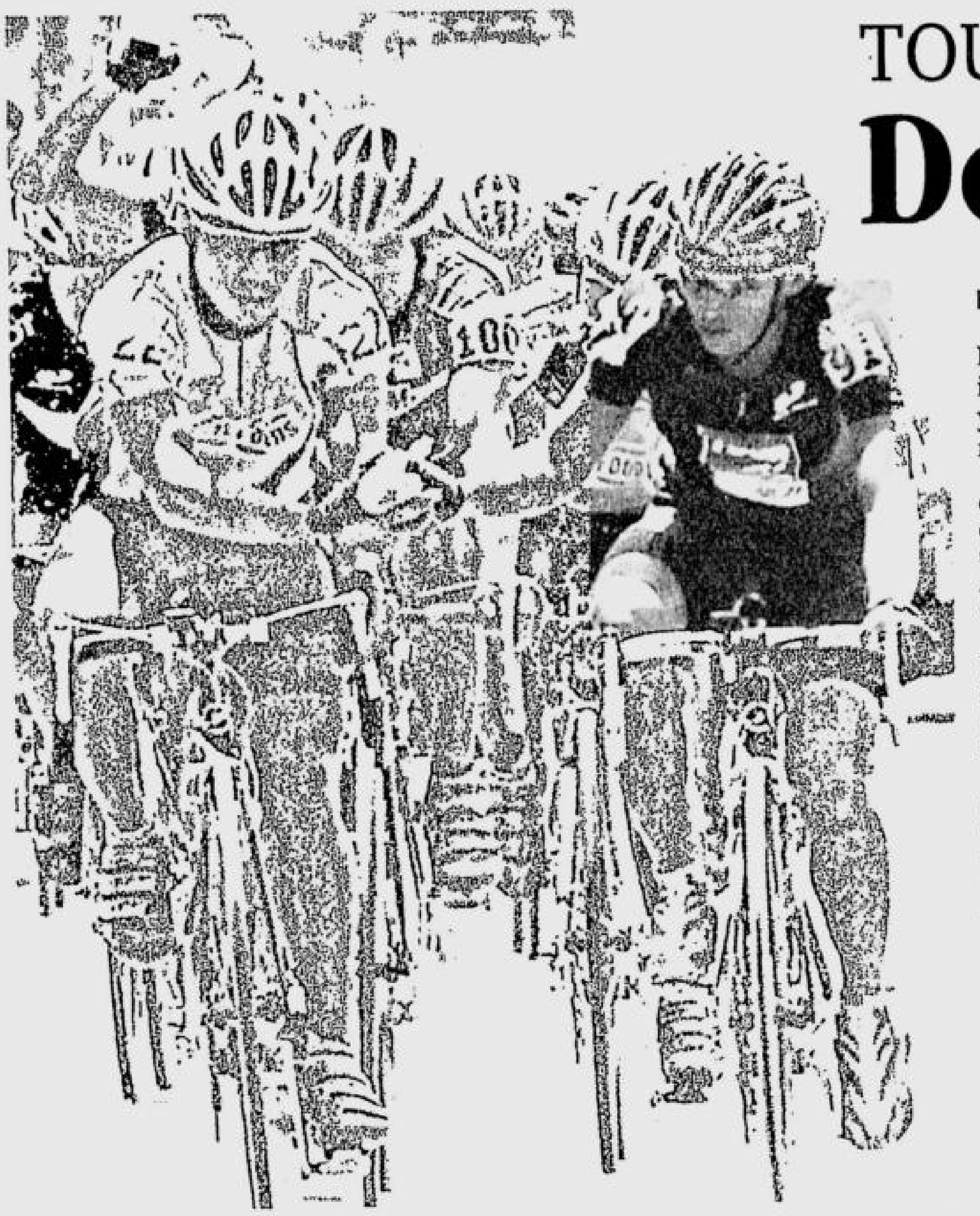

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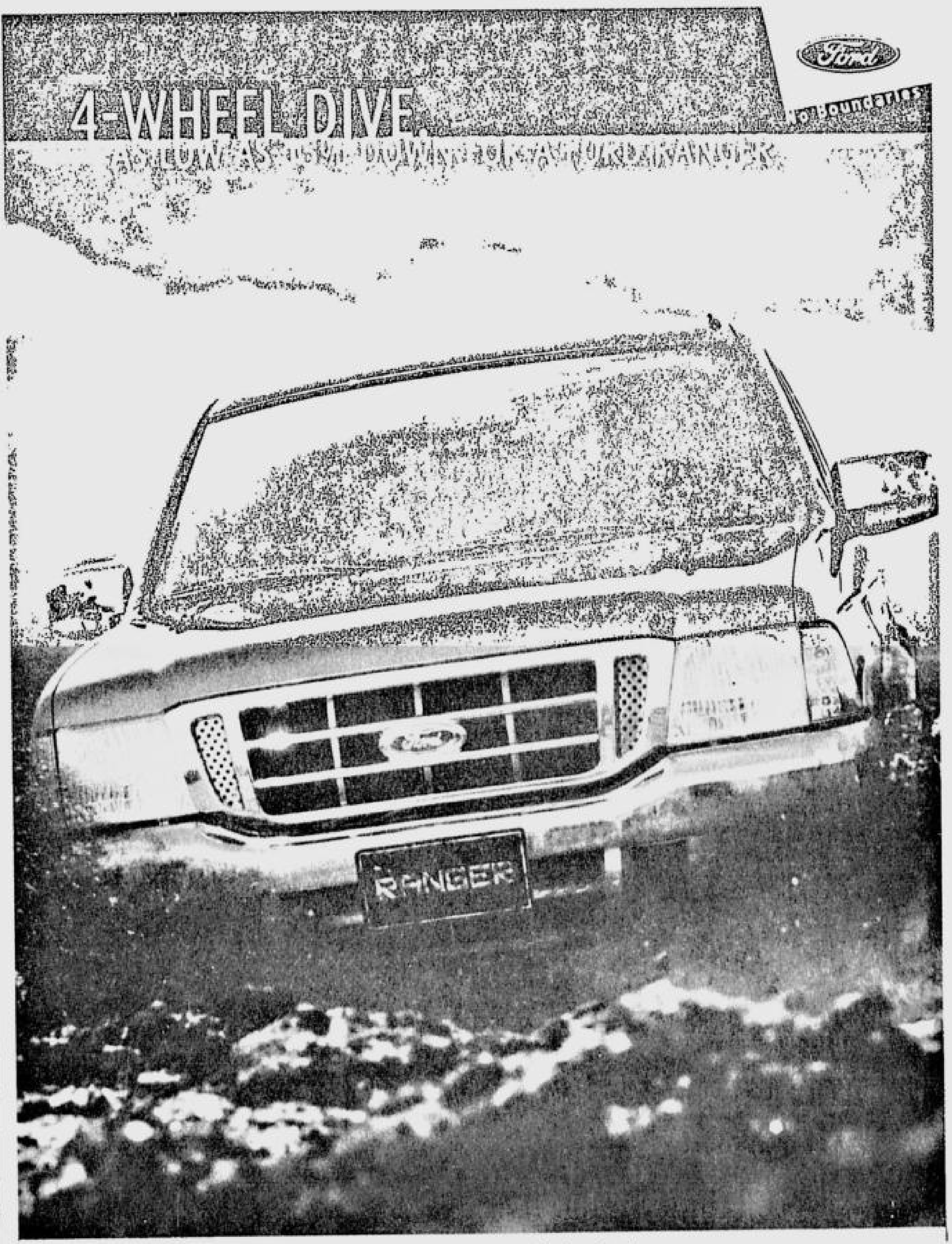

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Pacquiao gets unexpected challenge from Morales

PACQUIAO

By Salven L. Lagumbay, *Contributor*

MANNY Pacquiao, still suffering from a painful right leg, yesterday received an unexpected challenge from Erik Morales, the Mexican ring great whom he plans to fight after his monumental May 8 bout in Las Vegas.

Morales, reigning World Boxing Council super-featherweight king, said he doubts if Pacquiao could make it past WBA/IBF featherweight champion Juan Manuel Marquez; but if he does, they could rumble in Las Vegas "in October or November."

Pacquiao (38-2-1, 30 KO's) tangles with Marquez (42-2, 33 KO's) for all the featherweight bragging rights on the planet.

Morales (46-1, 34 KO's), who recently received Boxer of the Year 2003 honors from the Mexican Boxing Commission, vowed that after his unification fight with IBF champ Carlos "Famous" Hernandez on July 31, he would like to face Pacquiao next but on one condition.

"Manny Pacquiao must first defeat Juan Manuel Márquez on May 8 in Las Vegas, then in October or November I will fight the Filipino also in Las Vegas. If Pacquiao loses, then we will see who will be my next rival," said Morales, in an interview with Mexican writer Ernesto Castellanos.

In the event Pacquiao loses to Marquez, Morales added, he would have to choose among Jesus Chavez, Marco Antonio Barrera and Diego Corrales as his next foe.

Meanwhile, Trainer of the Year Freddie Roach dismissed as "nothing serious" the right leg pain Pacquiao has been going through at the Wild Card Gym in Los Angeles.

Pacquiao himself assured fight fans that the injury is just a result of daily hard training, and that he should be more than ready to tangle with Marquez come fight night.

OUT OF THE CELLAR

Streaking SLR rips Purefoods

GAME TODAY (*Puerto Princesa City*)
5:30 p.m.—Barangay Ginebra vs Alaska

By Musong Castillo, *Contributor*

STA. Lucia threw away a hot start and had to come back from 13 points down in the third period last night to notch a third straight win at the expense of Purefoods, 99-90, and climb out of the PBA Gran Matador Fiesta Conference cellar.

Gerard Francisco kept the comebacking Kenneth Duremdes on the bench in the stretch, coming up with the little things needed as the Realtors improved to 4-7 while dealing the Tender Juicy Hotdogs a fourth consecutive setback and eighth loss in 11 games overall.

"There are still seven games left for us," said Sta. Lucia coach Alfrancis Chua. "Anything can happen. You ask us if we think we can make the top four, honestly, I feel that now we have a shot. We've grown tired of losing."

The Realtors opened their season with five straight losses and were 1-7 overall at one point.

But a sudden surge of brilliance has now put a top four finish within reach after Derrick Brown scored 38 points and pulled down 15 rebounds in his first game against his former team.

Francisco finished with only four points, but his two feeds for the night came at a very crucial time. Marlou Aquino completed a three-point play on his first assist and the second enabled Norman Gonzales to score unmolested for an 89-82 lead going into the final 2:20.

His last basket was the dagger to the heart of the Hotdogs – a left-handed layup that made it 93-84 with 73 seconds remaining.

Sta. Lucia opened the game with a 9-0 lead, then took an 18-8 spread and was comfortably ahead until a long cold spell enabled the Hotdogs to get back in the game before halftime.

The third period was even worse as Purefoods even built a 73-60 lead at one point before things fell in place again for the Realtors behind Brown, Aquino, Dennis Espino and Francisco.

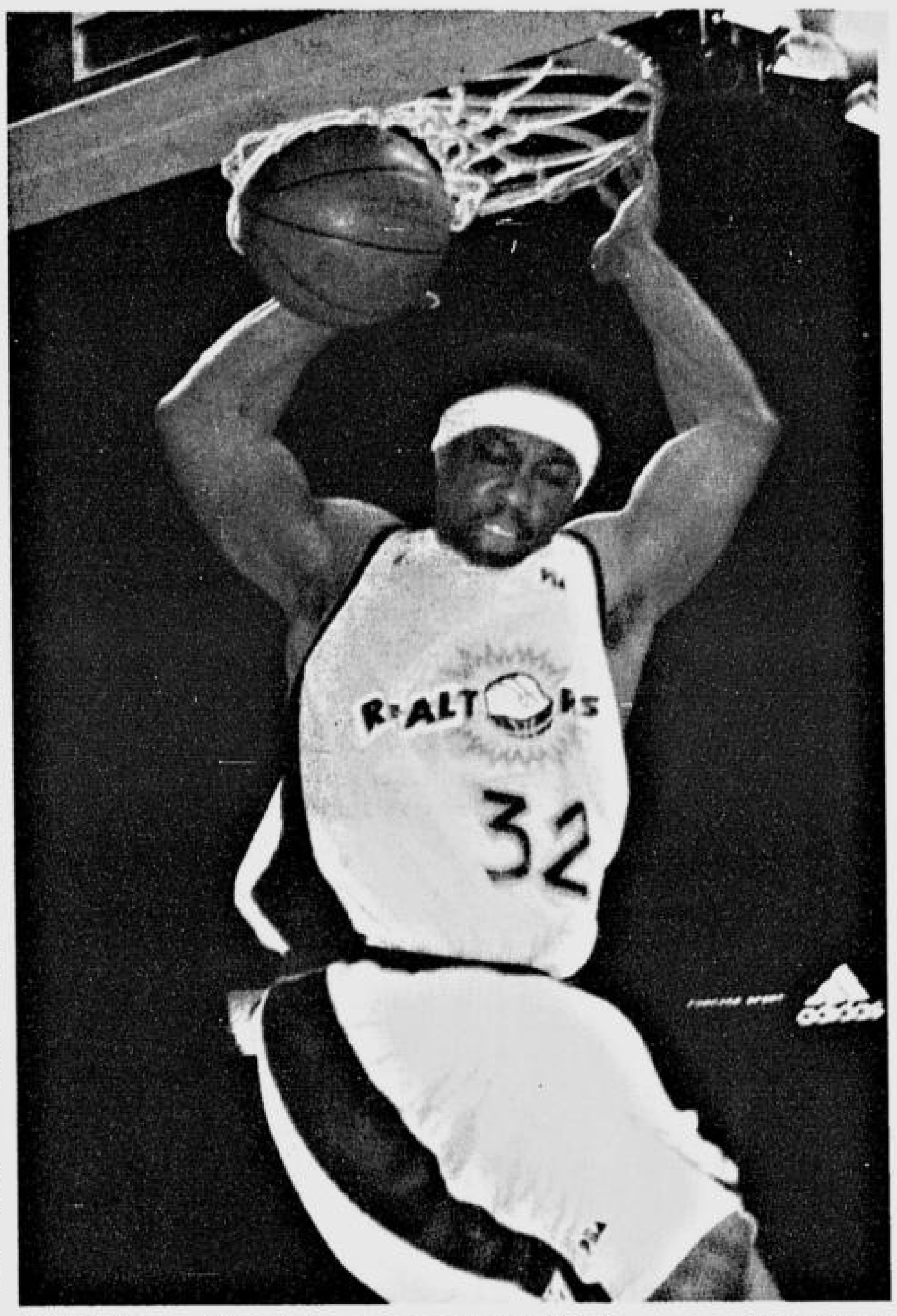
Meanwhile, Barangay Ginebra, loser of its last six games, clashes with Alaska in a road game scheduled in Puerto Princesa City at 5:30 p.m. today.

Scores:

STA. LUCIA 99–Brown 38, Espino 21, Mendoza 16, Aquino 10, Duremdes 4, Gonzales 4, Francisco 4, Cuan 2, Ong 0, Tan 0.

PUREFOODS 90–Elisma 19, Castillo 15, Johnson 12, Raymundo 12, Yee 10, Yap 9, Simon 5, Patrimonio 5, Artadi 2, Demape 1.

Quarters: 27-18, 48-46, 65-73, 99-90.


DERRICK Brown of Sta. Lucia scores on a breakaway slam. AUGUST DELA CRUZ

Mariano, Nadera stun foes

DUBAI—Filipino International Masters Nelson Mariano II and Barlo Nadera upset their GM opponents from Ukraine to stay with the lead pack with two points each after two rounds of the strong Dubai Open Chess Championship here.

Mariano, 29, an army man with a FIDE rating of 2416, brought down Anton Korobov, rated 2571 and one of Ukraine's rising stars at 21. Mariano essayed the Chameleon variation against the Sicilian defense of Korobov and, with queenside play, won two pawns and threatened mate to force resignation on the 25th move.

Nadera, 38, from the Air Force, was on the defensive against Zahar Efimeko, who had a rating of 2566 against the Filipino's 2390. On the black side of a French Winawer variation, Nadera countered with a Knight sacrifice and threatened mate or a win of a queen as Efimenko blundered under time pressure.

The other Filipino players were not as lucky.

GM Bong Villamayor lost to 9th seed Harikrishna of India in 60 moves of the Filipino's English Opening while Woman International Master Cristine Rose Mariano bowed to FIDE Master Hatim Al-Hadarani of Yemen.

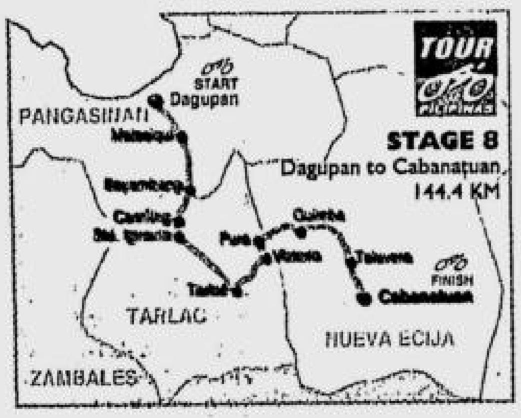
Welcoat aims for win No. 5

WELCOAT stakes its unbeaten record against defending champion Hapee Toothpaste today in the 2004 PBL Unity Cup eliminations at the Pasig Sports Center.

The Paintmasters shoot for their fifth victory when they tangle with the Teeth Sparklers (3-1) in the main encounter at 4 p.m.

Viva Mineral Water, running second at 4-1, collides with skidding Sunkist-UST (3-2) earlier at 2 p.m.

The Water Force, who bowed to Welcoat before the Holy Week break, came back strong with three successive wins over weaker rivals. *Trina Ibarle*



STAGE 7 RESULTS

Individual results

1. Fronda, O. (Mall and More) 5:51:37
2. Calderon, J. (Beer na Beer) same
3. Ramos, M. (Dole) same
4. Atilano, L. (Mall and More) same
5. Calosa, W. (Tanduay) same
6. Ravina, B. (Vat Riders) 5:52:07
7. Quirimit, A. (Tanduay) 5:52:11
8. Reyes, M. (PLDT) same
9. Guillen, J. (Samsung) 5:52:41
10. Celeste, F. (Vat Riders) same
11. Ganigan, D. (Vat Riders) 5:52:47
12. Domingo, E. (Postmen) 5:52:52
13. Gorantes, E.(Metro Drug) same
14. Quinones, E. (Purefoods) 5:52:55
15. Reynante, L. (Postmen) same

Overall Ind. standings (continuation)

10. Barnachea, S. (Mall and More) 12:13 mins. behind, 11. Dolosa, R. (Metro Drug) 12:35 mins. behind, 12. Calderon, J. (Beer na Beer) 13:06 mins. behind, 13. Celeste, F. (Vat Riders) 13:07 mins. behind, 14. Ganigan, D. (Vat Riders) 14:10 mins. behind, 15. Baluyot, V. (Samsung) 14:45 mins. behind, 16. Millanes, J. (Postmen) 14:54 mins. behind, 17. Ravina, B. (Vat Riders) 14:59 mins. behind, 18. Jazul, C. (Beer na Beer) 16:58 mins. behind, 19. Navarro, R. (Tanduay) 17:37 mins. behind, 20. Davadilla, W. (Pureffods) 17:40 mins. behind

Team overall

1. Postmen 90:06:25.763, 2. Beer na Beer 23:41.95 mins. behind, 3. Purefoods 26:05.94 mins. behind, 4. Dole 28:09.31 mins. behind, 5. Samsung 28:19.00 mins. behind, 6. Mall and More 30:48:35 mins. behind, 7. Metro Drug 33:56:51 mins. behind, 8. PLDT 35:45:76 mins. behind, 9. Vat Riders 38:15:40 mins. behind, 10. Tanduay 49:13 mins. behind, 11. Marsmanm Drysdale 58:57.03 mins. behind, 12. Patrol 117 1:04:27.69 behind

Domingo ...

From page A19

away.

Sherwin Diamsay of PLDT, the disqualified winner of the fourth stage, became the second rider to abandon the Tour due to flu.

Incidentally, flu survivor Quirimit rode strong yesterday, hanging on with his peers to wind up seventh in the stage, 33 seconds from the top finishers. He remained 38th overall, 37 minutes 23 seconds behind Domingo.

This year's tour is sponsored by Lactovitale, Pharex, Isuzu, Red Bull, Summit and Gatorade.

Superals post double-digit margins

THE SUPERAL siblings, Crystal Faith and Princess, virtually booked trips to the Callaway Junior World championships in San Diego, California after erecting double-digit leads in yesterday's second round of the national qualifying tournament at the Sherwood Hills and Riviera Executive courses.

Crystal Faith padded her lead to 14 in girls' Class B (13-14 years) and Princess stormed in front by 15 in girls' Class E (7-8) as they moved on the brink of completing a repeat of their family sweep in the opening leg two weeks ago with brother Wolen also expected to easily rule boys' Class C (11-12).

Jayvie Agojo also made her move with a 78 and seized the girls' Class A (15-17) upperhand from Remijin Camping even as Dottie Ardina pulled away in Class D (9-10) of the tourney supported chiefly by Samsung, DHL, Philippine Airlines and ICTSI.

Winners here are assured of slots in the national contingent that will be sent to the Junior World this July.

Ardina upped her lead to 10 over Ma-an Legaspi with a 73-144 in girls' Class D while Mikee Camitoc kept Miko Yee at bay with a 74-151 to lead by five in boys' Class B.

Over at the Riviera, JR Gonzales scored a 55 to pull even with AR Ramos (57) at 117 in boys' Class E in the 54-hole tourney also supported by Golf Pro International, Gonads and Unilever.

Justin Dy also emerged as the new leader in boys' Class F with his 66-132 pushing him past Rupert Zaragosa (71-135) by three strokes. The girls' Class F leader was still Janella Buen (74-150).

AGOJO

2nd round scores:

Class A: Boys–T. Asistio 74-145, J. Tambunting 72-147, G. Bunyi 74-153; Girls–J. Agojo 78-154, R. Camping 82-155, M. Salivio 74-159

Class B: Boys–M. Camitoc 74-151, M. Yee 73-156, A. Guy 81-158; Girls–C. Superal 77-152, D. de Villa 82-166, B. dela Paz 91-169

Class C: Girls–C. Rodriguez 79-156, M. Piccio 80-156, R. de Guzman 85-163

Class D: Boys–M. Tabuena 77-145, JP del Claro 74-151, B. dela Paz 80-155; Girls-D. Ardina 73-144, M. Legaspi 80-154, C. Potenciano 78-164

Class E: Boys–AR Ramos 57-117, JR Gonzales 55-117, T. Arevalo 69-130; Girls–P. Superal 72-140, F. Medalla 84-159, D. Gonzales 72-160

Class F:Boys–J. Dy 66-132, R. Zaragosa 71-135, K. Kano 69-144; Girls–J. Buen 74-150, A. Arevalo 80-154

A salute to Tommy Manotoc

SPECTATOR

Al S. Mendoza

I FIND it hard to find a reason why the Los Angeles Lakers can't win this year's NBA title. They are 2-0 over Yao Ming and the Houston Rockets in their Western Conference first-round series.

While Game 1 was a cliffhanger of a win for the Lakers and the Rockets could have won it had the usually deadly Jim Jackson made a side jumper at the buzzer, Game 2 on Tuesday was a Los Angeles show for the most part of the game. This, despite the fact that Shaquille O'Neal had a playoff career-low of 7 points.

"I didn't really play in the important parts of the game," O'Neal said after the Lakers' 98-84 victory. "I was on the bench in foul trouble."

He only had 2 points and 3 fouls in the first half, forcing him to virtually play a cautious game in the final half.

But still, the Lakers showed championship form as the other half of what is now known as the Los Angeles' Fab Four (O'Neal, Kobe Bryant, Karl Malone and Gary Payton) took matters into their own hands. I refer to Bryant (36 points) and Malone (17), whose combined 53 points was 8 points more than half of the Lakers' total output of 98. Payton had only 6 points, although he more than made up for his scoring slack with his ball handling savvy.

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And, yes, against The Fab Four, the Rockets will need the unseen power from outer space to derail the Lakers' advance to the next round. If the Lakers lose, I will not eat this column like what my idol, Teddy Benigno, did to his column some decades ago when his prediction of an NCAA game faltered. Instead, I will buy Valentin Dakuykoy a drink at his favorite watering hole these days—at Merk's Place in Greenbelt 3. That'd cost me a fortune but that'd be all right. You've got to pay the price sometimes to sustain that streak of madness in us.

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As Manotoc himself had said when he unwrapped his golf foundation at Wack Wack on Erap's birthday: "We want to help without interfering with the NGAP. In fact, we're here to assist them."

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It's in Iraq, in case you still don't know.

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Pacquiao gets unexpected challenge from Morales

PACQUIAO

By Salven L. Lagumbay, *Contributor*

MANNY Pacquiao, still suffering from a painful right leg, yesterday received an unexpected challenge from Erik Morales, the Mexican ring great whom he plans to fight after his monumental May 8 bout in Las Vegas.

Morales, reigning World Boxing Council super-featherweight king, said he doubts if Pacquiao could make it past WBA/IBF featherweight champion Juan Manuel Marquez; but if he does, they could rumble in Las Vegas "in October or November."

Pacquiao (38-2-1, 30 KO's) tangles with Marquez (42-2, 33 KO's) for all the featherweight bragging rights on the planet.

Morales (46-1, 34 KO's), who recently received Boxer of the Year 2003 honors from the Mexican Boxing Commission, vowed that after his unification fight with IBF champ Carlos "Famous" Hernandez on July 31, he would like to face Pacquiao next but on one condition.

"Manny Pacquiao must first defeat Juan Manuel Márquez on May 8 in Las Vegas, then in October or November I will fight the Filipino also in Las Vegas. If Pacquiao loses, then we will see who will be my next rival," said Morales, in an interview with Mexican writer Ernesto Castellanos.

In the event Pacquiao loses to Marquez, Morales added, he would have to choose among Jesus Chavez, Marco Antonio Barrera and Diego Corrales as his next foe.

Meanwhile, Trainer of the Year Freddie Roach dismissed as "nothing serious" the right leg pain Pacquiao has been going through at the Wild Card Gym in Los Angeles.

Pacquiao himself assured fight fans that the injury is just a result of daily hard training, and that he should be more than ready to tangle with Marquez come fight night.

OUT OF THE CELLAR

Streaking SLR rips Purefoods

GAME TODAY (*Puerto Princesa City*)
5:30 p.m.—Barangay Ginebra vs Alaska

By Musong Castillo, *Contributor*

STA. Lucia threw away a hot start and had to come back from 13 points down in the third period last night to notch a third straight win at the expense of Purefoods, 99-90, and climb out of the PBA Gran Matador Fiesta Conference cellar.

Gerard Francisco kept the comebacking Kenneth Duremdes on the bench in the stretch, coming up with the little things needed as the Realtors improved to 4-7 while dealing the Tender Juicy Hotdogs a fourth consecutive setback and eighth loss in 11 games overall.

"There are still seven games left for us," said Sta. Lucia coach Alfrancis Chua. "Anything can happen. You ask us if we think we can make the top four, honestly, I feel that now we have a shot. We've grown tired of losing."

The Realtors opened their season with five straight losses and were 1-7 overall at one point.

But a sudden surge of brilliance has now put a top four finish within reach after Derrick Brown scored 38 points and pulled down 15 rebounds in his first game against his former team.

Francisco finished with only four points, but his two feeds for the night came at a very crucial time. Marlou Aquino completed a three-point play on his first assist and the second enabled Norman Gonzales to score unmolested for an 89-82 lead going into the final 2:20.

His last basket was the dagger to the heart of the Hotdogs – a left-handed layup that made it 93-84 with 73 seconds remaining.

Sta. Lucia opened the game with a 9-0 lead, then took an 18-8 spread and was comfortably ahead until a long cold spell enabled the Hotdogs to get back in the game before halftime.

The third period was even worse as Purefoods even built a 73-60 lead at one point before things fell in place again for the Realtors behind Brown, Aquino, Dennis Espino and Francisco.

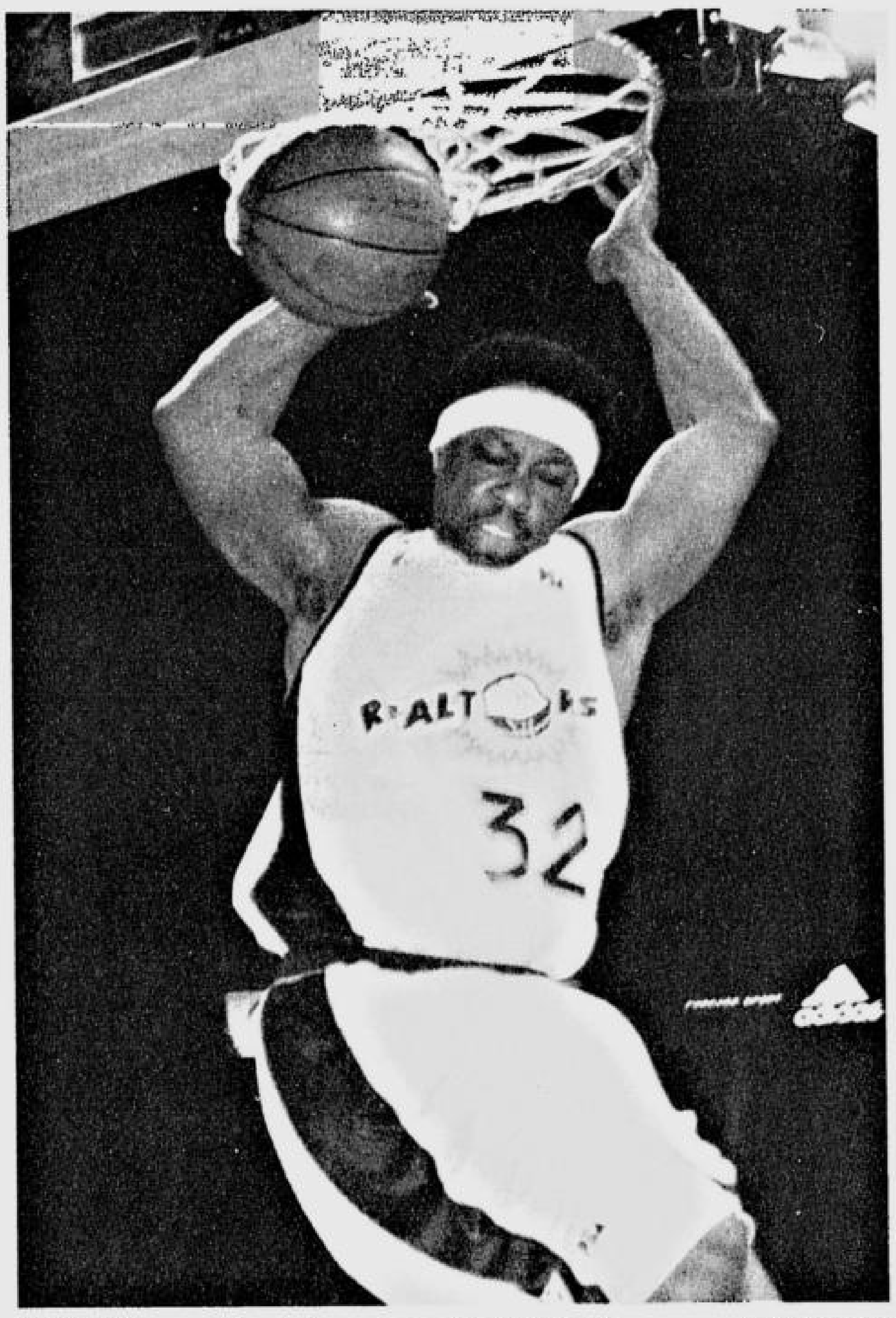
Meanwhile, Barangay Ginebra, loser of its last six games, clashes with Alaska in a road game scheduled in Puerto Princesa City at 5:30 p.m. today.

Scores:

STA. LUCIA 99--Brown 38, Espino 21, Mendoza 16, Aquino 10, Duremdes 4, Gonzales 4, Francisco 4, Cuan 2, Ong 0, Tan 0.

PUREFOODS 90--Elisma 19, Castillo 15, Johnson 12, Raymundo 12, Yee 10, Yap 9, Simon 5, Patrimonio 5, Artadi 2, Demape 1

Quarters: 27-18, 48-46, 65-73, 99-90.


DERRICK Brown of Sta. Lucia scores on a breakaway slam. AUGUST DELA CRUZ

Mariano, Nadera stun foes

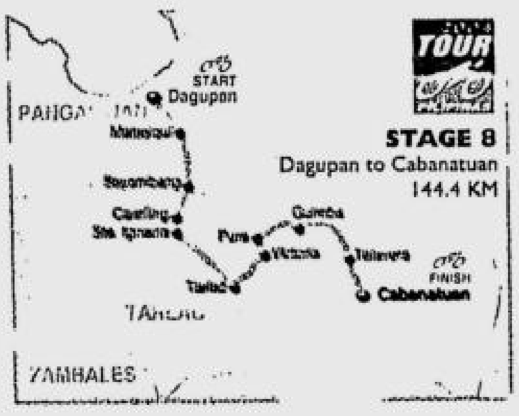
DUBAI—Filipino International Masters Nelson Mariano II and Barlo Nadera upset their GM opponents from Ukraine to stay with the lead pack with two points each after two rounds of the strong Dubai Open Chess Championship here.

Mariano, 29, an army man with a FIDE rating of 2416, brought down Anton Korobov, rated 2571 and one of Ukraine's rising stars at 21. Mariano essayed the Chameleon variation against the Sicilian defense of Korobov and, with queenside play, won two pawns and threatened mate to force resignation on the 25th move.

Nadera, 38, from the Air Force, was on the defensive against Zahar Efimeko, who had a rating of 2566 against the Filipino's 2390. On the black side of a French Winawer variation, Nadera countered with a Knight sacrifice and threatened mate or a win of a queen as Efimenko blundered under time pressure.

The other Filipino players were not as lucky.

GM Bong Villamayor lost to 9th seed Harikrishna of India in 60 moves of the Filipino's English Opening while Woman International Master Cristine Rose Mariano bowed to FIDE Master Hatim Al-Hadarani of Yemen.



STAGE 8
Dagupan to Cabanatuan
144.4 KM

STAGE 7 RESULTS

Individual results

1. Fronda, O. (Mail and More) 5:51:37
2. Calderon, J. (Beer na Beer) same
3. Ramos, M. (Dole) same
4. Atilano, L. (Mail and More) same
5. Calosa, W. (Tanduay) same
6. Ravina, B. (Vat Riders) 5:52:07
7. Quirimit, A. (Tanduay) 5:52:11
8. Reyes, M. (PLDT) same
9. Guillen, J. (Samsung) 5:52:41
10. Celeste, F. (Vat Riders) same
11. Ganigan, D. (Vat Riders) 5:52:47
12. Domingo, E. (Postmen) 5:52:52
13. Gorantes, E.(Metro Drug) same
14. Quinones, E. (Purefoods) 5:52:55
15. Reynante, I. (Postmen) same

Overall Ind. standings (continuation)

10. Barnachea, S (Mail and More) 12:13 mins. behind, 11. Dolosa, R. (Metro Drug) 12:35 mins. behind, 12. Calderon, J. (Beer na Beer) 13:06 mins. behind, 13. Celeste, F. (Vat Riders) 13:07 mins. behind, 14. Ganigan, D. (Vat Riders) 14:10 mins. behind, 15. Baluyot, V. (Samsung) 14:45 mins. behind, 16. Millanes, J. (Postmen) 14:54 mins. behind, 17. Ravina, B (Vat Riders) 14:59 mins. behind, 18. Jazul, C. (Beer na Beer) 16:58 mins. behind, 19. Navarro, R. (Tanduay) 17:37 mins. behind, 20. Davadilla, W. (Pureffods) 17:40 mins. behind

Team overall

1. Postmen 90:06:25.763, 2. Beer na Beer 23:41.95 mins. behind, 3. Purefoods 26:05.94 mins. behind, 4. Dole 28:09.31 mins behind, 5. Samsung 28:19.00 mins. behind, 6. Mail and More 30:48.35 mins. behind, 7. Metro Drug 33:56:51 mins. behind, 8. PLDT 35:45:76 mins. behind, 9. Vat Riders 38:15:40 mins. behind, 10. Tanduay 49:13 mins. behind, 11. Marsmanm Drysdale 58:57.03 mins. behind, 12. Patrol 117 1:04:27.69 behind

Domingo ...

From page A19

away.

Sherwin Diamsay of PLDT, the disqualified winner of the fourth stage, became the second rider to abandon the Tour due to flu.

Incidentally, flu survivor Quirimit rode strong yesterday, hanging on with his peers to wind up seventh in the stage, 33 seconds from the top finishers. He remained 38th overall, 37 minutes 23 seconds behind Domingo.

This year's tour is sponsored by Lactovitale, Pharex, Isuzu, Red Bull, Summit and Gatorade.

Superals post double-digit margins

THE SUPERAL siblings, Crystal Faith and Princess, virtually booked trips to the Callaway Junior World championships in San Diego, California after erecting double-digit leads in yesterday's second round of the national qualifying tournament at the Sherwood Hills and Riviera Executive courses.

Crystal Faith padded her lead to 14 in girls' Class B (13-14 years) and Princess stormed in front by 15 in girls' Class E (7-8) as they moved on the brink of completing a repeat of their family sweep in the opening leg two weeks ago with brother Wolen also expected to easily rule boys' Class C (11-12).

Jayvie Agojo also made her move with a 78 and seized the girls' Class A (15-17) upperhand from Remijin Camping even as Dottie Ardina pulled away in Class D (9-10) of the tourney supported chiefly by Samsung, DHL, Philippine Airlines and ICTSI.

Winners here are assured of slots in the national contingent that will be sent to the Junior World this July.

Ardina upped her lead to 10 over Ma-an Legaspi with a 73-144 in girls' Class D while Mikee Camitoc kept Miko Yee at bay with a 74-151 to lead by five in boys' Class B.

AGOJO

Over at the Riviera, JR Gonzales scored a 55 to pull even with AR Ramos (57) at 117 in boys' Class E in the 54-hole tourney also supported by Golf Pro International, Gonads and Unilever.

Justin Dy also emerged as the new leader in boys' Class F with his 66-132 pushing him past Rupert Zaragosa (71-135) by three strokes. The girls' Class F leader was still Janella Buen (74-150).

2nd round scores:

Class A: Boys–T. Asistio 74-145, J. Tambunting 72-147, G. Bunyi 74-153; Girls–J. Agojo 78-154, R. Camping 82-155, M. Salivio 74-159

Class B: Boys–M. Camitoc 74-151, M. Yee 73-156, A. Guy 81-158; Girls–C. Superal 77-152, D. de Villa 82-166, B. dela Paz 91-169

Class C: Girls–C. Rodriguez 79-156, M. Piccio 80-156, R. de Guzman 85-163

Class D. Boys–M. Tabuena 77-145, JP del Claro 74-151, B. dela Paz 80-155; Girls-D. Ardina 73-144, M. Legaspi 80-154, C. Potenciano 78-164

Class E: Boys–AR Ramos 57-117, JR Gonzales 55-117, T. Arevalo 69-130; Girls–P. Superal 72-140, F. Medalla 84-159, D. Gonzales 72-160

Class F:Boys–J. Dy 66-132, R. Zaragosa 71-135, K. Kano 69-144; Girls–J. Buen 74-150, A. Arevalo 80-154

Welcoat aims for win No. 5

WELCOAT stakes its unbeaten record against defending champion Hapee Toothpaste today in the 2004 PBL Unity Cup eliminations at the Pasig Sports Center.

The Paintmasters shoot for their fifth victory when they tangle with the Teeth Sparklers (3-1) in the main encounter at 4 p.m.

Viva Mineral Water, running second at 4-1, collides with skidding Sunkist-UST (3-2) earlier at 2 p.m.

The Water Force, who bowed to Welcoat before the Holy Week break, came back strong with three successive wins over weaker rivals. *Trina Ibarle*

A salute to Tommy Manotoc

SPECTATOR

Al S. Mendoza

I FIND it hard to find a reason why the Los Angeles Lakers can't win this year's NBA title. They are 2-0 over Yao Ming and the Houston Rockets in their Western Conference first-round series.

While Game 1 was a cliffhanger of a win for the Lakers and the Rockets could have won it had the usually deadly Jim Jackson made a side jumper at the buzzer, Game 2 on Tuesday was a Los Angeles show for the most part of the game. This, despite the fact that Shaquille O'Neal had a playoff career-low of 7 points.

"I didn't really play in the important parts of the game," O'Neal said after the Lakers' 98-84 victory. "I was on the bench in foul trouble."

He only had 2 points and 3 fouls in the first half, forcing him to virtually play a cautious game in the final half.

But still, the Lakers showed championship form as the other half of what is now known as the Los Angeles' Fab Four (O'Neal, Kobe Bryant, Karl Malone and Gary Payton) took matters into their own hands. I refer to Bryant (36 points) and Malone (17), whose combined 53 points was 8 points more than half of the Lakers' total output of 98. Payton had only 6 points, although he more than made up for his scoring slack with his ball handling savvy.

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And, yes, against The Fab Four, the Rockets will need the unseen power from outer space to derail the Lakers' advance to the next round. If the Lakers lose, I will not eat this column like what my idol, Teddy Benigno, did to his column some decades ago when his prediction of an NCAA game faltered. Instead, I will buy Valentin Dakuykoy a drink at his favorite watering hole these days—at Merk's Place in Greenbelt 3. That'd cost me a fortune but that'd be all right. You've got to pay the price sometimes to sustain that streak of madness in us.

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Pacers, Kings, Nets take 2-0 leads vs playoff foes

INDIANAPOLIS, Indiana—Al Harrington did a nice job filling in for Ron Artest. Jonathan Bender did an even nicer job filling in for Al Harrington.

Harrington had 12 points and 13 rebounds and Bender scored nine of his 11 points in the fourth quarter, lifting the Indiana Pacers to a 103-90 first round playoff victory over the Boston Celtics on Tuesday.

The top-seeded Pacers opened a 2-0 lead in their Eastern Conference first-round series despite playing without Artest, their All-Star forward and the NBA Defensive Player of the Year.

Artest was suspended for coming off the bench during a brief altercation in Game One, when he hounded Celtics All-Star forward Paul Pierce into 5-of-18 shooting and eight turnovers.

His absence left the assignment to Harrington and Bender, a pair of players who entered the NBA directly out of high school.

"Lots of guys contributed (in defending Pierce)" Pacers coach Rick Carlisle said. "I really have to give credit to Jonathan Bender for an incredible effort. He has not had to guard a player of Pierce's caliber all year and he really did a good job."

Said Bender: "I just tried to use my length. I'm 7 foot, so I just tried to contest every shot and use my quickness. I just tried to keep him out of his game. It was a great challenge."

Harrington, a Sixth Man of the Year candidate, moved into the starting lineup and scored 10 points in the second quarter, keeping Indiana within striking distance. He opened the fourth quarter with a follow dunk that triggered a decisive run.

Harrington and Bender made Pierce work for his 27 points. Pierce made just 7 of 18 shots as he battled foul trouble and did not get much help from his teammates.

Indiana's bench outscored Boston's by a whopping 43-11, including 35-3 in the second half.

The Sacramento Kings played perhaps their best defense of the season and held on for an 83-79 victory over Dallas to take a 2-0 lead in their Western Conference series.

Chris Webber had a triple-double and Mike Bibby and Brad Miller made big shots in the final 90 seconds for the fourth-seeded Kings, who survived in a game entirely unfamiliar to them.

Dallas and Sacramento finished 1-2 in the NBA in scoring this season as the only teams to average better than 100 points per game.

The Kings won Sunday's opener 116-105 in an up-tempo game typical of these clubs.

However, this was the lowest-scoring game in 126 contests between the teams since Dallas entered the NBA in 1980. Game Three is Saturday in Dallas.

In East Rutherford, New Jersey, Kenyon Martin helped power the New Jersey Nets to another comfortable win.

Martin collected 22 points and a playoff career-high 16 rebounds as the Nets ran roughshod over the New York Knicks for a 99-81 victory and a 2-0 lead in their Eastern Conference series.

Second-seeded New Jersey placed five players and extended its playoff winning streak over Eastern Conference foes to 12 games.

"We don't talk, we just go out and play basketball," Martin said. "All we've done is win games."

DOUG Christie (right) hugs teammate Chris Webber after the Kings beat the Mavericks to take a 2-0 lead. AFP

Meanwhile, Los Angeles Lakers star Shaquille O'Neal filed a lawsuit Tuesday against a company he claims libeled and slandered him in a dispute over a celebrity basketball tournament.

The suit, filed in a US District Court, accuses Paramount Celebrity Management of the Tampa Bay area with misleading O'Neal's representatives about the charitable nature of the tournament. It also charges promoters knowingly made false statements to the media about O'Neal.

He never showed up to the August 2002 event that was billed as "Shaquille O'Neal Presents TCBW Basketball Game." The O'Neal said at the time that he had agreed to participate but not host the tournament.

AFP, AP

SPORTSWATCH

James is Rookie of the Year

CLEVELAND—LeBron James won the NBA Rookie of the Year award on Tuesday, capping a remarkable season in which he revived the Cleveland Cavaliers. The 19-year-old guard more than lived up to unprecedented hype in jumping straight from high school to the pros, becoming the youngest player to receive the award. James, last year's No. 1 overall draft pick, beat out Denver's Carmelo Anthony, his close friend. Anthony, also 19, played one season of college basketball, leading Syracuse to the NCAA championship. At a news conference at Gund Arena, James thanked Anthony. "I really felt like it was going to be a close race," James said. "He had a phenomenal season also." James received 508 points, including 78 of a possible 118 first-place votes, to become the first Cleveland rookie honored. Anthony finished with 430 points—with the other 40 first-place votes—in balloting by sports writers and broadcasters. Dwyane Wade of the Miami Heat was third with 117 points. ***AP***

Wild card boots out Ferrero

PARIS—Already deprived of the world's top two players, Roger Federer and Andy Roddick, the Monte Carlo Masters suffered another blow on Tuesday with the first-round exit of defending champion Juan Carlos Ferrero. The Spaniard, winner in 2002 and 2003, paid the high price for an unlucky draw, crashing out, 6-2, 6-3, against wildcard compatriot Alex Correjta in 69 minutes. After the demise on Monday of 1999 and 2001 winner Gustavo Kuerten, Ferrero's defeat left 1998 winner Carlos Moya as the only former champion still in the draw. Moya beat Armenian Sargis Sargsian, 7-6, 1-6, 6-3. Lleyton Hewitt and Marat Safin showed glimpses of their best, both rallying from a set down to reach the second round. Hewitt whippedFrench wildcard Julien Benneteau, 3-6, 6-3, 6-4. Safin overcame Belgian Olivier Rochus, 4-6, 6-3, 6-3. ***AFP***

Ford cars staked at Riviera golf

THE 6TH RIVIERA Invitational Golf championship will tee off today at both Langer and Couples courses in Silang, Cavite. The 36-hole event has drawn a record 220 teams, according to Riviera president Danny Pizarro. A member will be paired with his guest in the four-day tournament that stakes a Ford Everest as a hole-in-one prize. A Ford Lynx will be the door prize in the raffle/awards night on Sunday, April 25. The sponsors in this first ever 36-hole, four-day series include Mizuno, Ford, Smart, Asiana Airlines, The Turf Company, Amora, Del Valle & Associates Law Offices, IWSI (International Waste Systems, Inc.), Werdenberg Corp., Philippine National Oil Co., Petron, San Miguel Corporation, Pioneer Insurance Corp. and The Riviera Club 900. "We are confident the tournament will be another smashing success," said Commodore Pizarro.

NCA derby final round gets going

THE NATIONAL Cockers Association 7-Cock Derby championship round fires off at 5 p.m. today at the fully air-conditioned Araneta Coliseum with 52 quality fights lined up. Among the favorites are the entries of former DILG undersecretary Jun Santiago (Thunderbird Firefly 13) which is currently on a winning streak, Eddie Araneta (Iloilo Coliseum Liza Galore), Rep. Rudy Albano (Mulawin A. Jimafer), newspaper publisher Butch Macasaet (Greenwood Babibina), John Capinpin (J-Cap), Dicky Lim (Winslet Paniqui), among others. Meanwhile, the next NCA derbies (7-cock) are scheduled on May 4 and 6 (Dicky Lim and Max Roxas); May 18 and 20 (John Capinpin, Pol Estrellado and Boy Royo); June 1 and 3 (Rene Medina, Ric de Guzman and Alex Tang) and June 8 and 10 (Ronnie Puno). For inquiries, please contact 911-3101 and 911-2928 (look for Gloria Avena).

Bonds homers but Giants lose

SAN FRANCISCO—Barry Bonds homered in his seventh straight game Tuesday to give him 667 for his career, but the San Francisco Giants found themselves with a familiar result: a 9-5 loss to the San Diego Padres. "It doesn't matter. We're losing," Bonds said. He is one short of matching the major league record for consecutive games with a home run—shared by Dale Long (1956), Don Mattingly (1987) and Ken Griffey Jr. (1993). Bonds has homered in the last seven games in which he's had an at-bat, but the defending National League-West champions have lost four of those. He had a pinch-hit walk last Wednesday, which does not stop the streak under baseball's rules. ***AP***

Diego still in ICU; fans hold vigil

BUENOS AIRES, Argentina—Fans of the stricken Diego Maradona scrawled messages on Tuesday on simple notebook paper, T-shirts, flags or banners strung from apartment balconies: "The people are with you!" "You're immortal, Diego, Be Strong!"

Maradona, who led Argentina to the 1986 World Cup title and is revered as the country's greatest sports hero, remained for a third day in intensive care, battling a severe heart problem and a lung infection.

In Argentina, where soccer is a national obsession, compatriots of the ailing 43-year-old have unleashed an outpouring of support for their "futbol" idol by lighting candles, beating drums and scribbling messages of concern.

On Tuesday, doctors said Maradona remained on a respirator, still sedated, but responding to treatment even as his condition remained "delicate." Dr. Alfredo Cahe, Maradona's personal physician, said he expected the star would be hospitalized for some time.

"We're taking it one step at a time," he told reporters. "He's doing better today than yesterday."

Maradona was placed in intensive care on Sunday only hours after watching his former team Boca Juniors play at a local stadium. His doctors say the emergency hospitalization was not drug-related, but have not commented what prompted Maradona to enter the hospital.

MARADONA: Severe heart problem. REUTERS

He has been undergoing drug rehabilitation for cocaine abuse in Cuba.

But whether in homemade messages taped across the entrance to the hospital or in chant-filled visits outside his downtown Buenos Aires clinic, Argentines have sought ways to rally behind him.

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ADVT.

Pacers, Kings, Nets take 2-0 leads vs playoff foes

INDIANAPOLIS, Indiana—Al Harrington did a nice job filling in for Ron Artest. Jonathan Bender did an even nicer job filling in for Al Harrington.

Harrington had 12 points and 13 rebounds and Bender scored nine of his 11 points in the fourth quarter, lifting the Indiana Pacers to a 103-90 first round playoff victory over the Boston Celtics on Tuesday.

The top-seeded Pacers opened a 2-0 lead in their Eastern Conference first-round series despite playing without Artest, their All-Star forward and the NBA Defensive Player of the Year.

Artest was suspended for coming off the bench during a brief altercation in Game One, when he hounded Celtics All-Star forward Paul Pierce into 5-of-18 shooting and eight turnovers.

His absence left the assignment to Harrington and Bender, a pair of players who entered the NBA directly out of high school.

"Lots of guys contributed (in defending Pierce)" Pacers coach Rick Carlisle said. "I really have to give credit to Jonathan Bender for an incredible effort. He has not had to guard a player of Pierce's caliber all year and he really did a good job."

Said Bender: "I just tried to use my length. I'm 7 foot, so I just tried to contest every shot and use my quickness. I just tried to keep him out of his game. It was a great challenge."

Harrington, a Sixth Man of the Year candidate, moved into the starting lineup and scored 10 points in the second quarter, keeping Indiana within striking distance. He opened the fourth quarter with a follow dunk that triggered a decisive run.

Harrington and Bender made Pierce work for his 27 points. Pierce made just 7 of 18 shots as he battled foul trouble and did not get much help from his teammates.

Indiana's bench outscored Boston's by a whopping 43-11, including 35-3 in the second half.

The Sacramento Kings played perhaps their best defense of the season and held on for an 83-79 victory over Dallas to take a 2-0 lead in their Western Conference series.

Chris Webber had a triple-double and Mike Bibby and Brad Miller made big shots in the final 90 seconds for the fourth-seeded Kings, who survived in a game entirely unfamiliar to them.

Dallas and Sacramento finished 1-2 in the NBA in scoring this season as the only teams to average better than 100 points per game.

The Kings won Sunday's opener 116-105 in an up-tempo game typical of these clubs.

However, this was the lowest-scoring game in 126 contests between the teams since Dallas entered the NBA in 1980. Game Three is Saturday in Dallas.

In East Rutherford, New Jersey, Kenyon Martin helped power the New Jersey Nets to another comfortable win.

Martin collected 22 points and a playoff career-high 16 rebounds as the Nets ran roughshod over the New York Knicks for a 99-81 victory and a 2-0 lead in their Eastern Conference series.

Second-seeded New Jersey placed five players and extended its playoff winning streak over Eastern Conference foes to 12 games.

"We don't talk, we just go out and play basketball," Martin said. "All we've done is win games."

DOUG Christie (right) hugs teammate Chris Webber after the Kings beat the Mavericks to take a 2-0 lead. AFP

Meanwhile, Los Angeles Lakers star Shaquille O'Neal filed a lawsuit Tuesday against a company he claims libeled and slandered him in a dispute over a celebrity basketball tournament.

The suit, filed in a US District Court, accuses Paramount Celebrity Management of the Tampa Bay area with misleading O'Neal's representatives about the charitable nature of the tournament. It also charges promoters knowingly made false statements to the media about O'Neal.

He never showed up to the August 2002 event that was billed as "Shaquille O'Neal Presents TCBW Basketball Game." The O'Neal said at the time that he had agreed to participate but not host the tournament. *AFP, AP*

Diego still in ICU; fans hold vigil

BUENOS AIRES, Argentina—Fans of the stricken Diego Maradona scrawled messages on Tuesday on simple notebook paper, T-shirts, flags or banners strung from apartment balconies: "The people are with you!" "You're immortal, Diego, Be Strong!"

Maradona, who led Argentina to the 1986 World Cup title and is revered as the country's greatest sports hero, remained for a third day in intensive care, battling a severe heart problem and a lung infection.

In Argentina, where soccer is a national obsession, compatriots of the ailing 43-year-old have unleashed an outpouring of support for their "futbol" idol by lighting candles, beating drums and scribbling messages of concern.

On Tuesday, doctors said Maradona remained on a respirator, still sedated, but responding to treatment even as his condition remained "delicate." Dr. Alfredo Cahe, Maradona's personal physician, said he expected the star would be hospitalized for some time.

"We're taking it one step at a time," he told reporters. "He's doing better today than yesterday."

Maradona was placed in intensive care on Sunday only hours after watching his former team Boca Juniors play at a local stadium. His doctors say the emergency hospitalization was not drug-related, but have not commented what prompted Maradona to enter the hospital.

MARADONA: Severe heart problem. REUTERS

He has been undergoing drug rehabilitation for cocaine abuse in Cuba.

But whether in homemade messages taped across the entrance to the hospital or in chant-filled visits outside his downtown Buenos Aires clinic, Argentines have sought ways to rally behind him. *AP*

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SPORTSWATCH

James is Rookie of the Year

CLEVELAND—LeBron James won the NBA Rookie of the Year award on Tuesday, capping a remarkable season in which he revived the Cleveland Cavaliers. The 19-year-old guard more than lived up to unprecedented hype in jumping straight from high school to the pros, becoming the youngest player to receive the award. James, last year's No. 1 overall draft pick, beat out Denver's Carmelo Anthony, his close friend. Anthony, also 19, played one season of college basketball, leading Syracuse to the NCAA championship. At a news conference at Gund Arena, James thanked Anthony. "I really felt like it was going to be a close race," James said. "He had a phenomenal season also." James received 508 points, including 78 of a possible 118 first-place votes, to become the first Cleveland rookie honored. Anthony finished with 430 points—with the other 40 first-place votes—in balloting by sports writers and broadcasters. Dwyane Wade of the Miami Heat was third with 117 points. *AP*

Wild card boots out Ferrero

PARIS—Already deprived of the world's top two players, Roger Federer and Andy Roddick, the Monte Carlo Masters suffered another blow on Tuesday with the first-round exit of defending champion Juan Carlos Ferrero. The Spaniard, winner in 2002 and 2003, paid the high price for an unlucky draw, crashing out, 6-2, 6-3, against wildcard compatriot Alex Correjta in 69 minutes. After the demise on Monday of 1999 and 2001 winner Gustavo Kuerten, Ferrero's defeat left 1998 winner Carlos Moya as the only former champion still in the draw. Moya beat Armenian Sargis Sargsian, 7-6, 1-6, 6-3. Lleyton Hewitt and Marat Safin showed glimpses of their best, both rallying from a set down to reach the second round. Hewitt whippedFrench wildcard Julien Benneteau, 3-6, 6-3, 6-4. Safin overcame Belgian Olivier Rochus, 4-6, 6-3, 6-3. *AFP*

Ford cars staked at Riviera golf

THE 6TH RIVIERA Invitational Golf championship will tee off today at both Langer and Couples courses in Silang, Cavite. The 36-hole event has drawn a record 220 teams, according to Riviera president Danny Pizarro. A member will be paired with his guest in the four-day tournament that stakes a Ford Everest as a hole-in-one prize. A Ford Lynx will be the door prize in the raffle/awards night on Sunday, April 25. The sponsors in this first ever 36-hole, four-day series include Mizuno, Ford, Smart, Asiana Airlines, The Turf Company, Amora, Del Valle & Associates Law Offices, IWSI (International Waste Systems, Inc.), Werdenberg Corp., Philippine National Oil Co., Petron, San Miguel Corporation, Pioneer Insurance Corp. and The Riviera Club 900. "We are confident the tournament will be another smashing success," said Commodore Pizarro.

NCA derby final round gets going

THE NATIONAL Cockers Association 7-Cock Derby championship round fires off at 5 p.m. today at the fully air-conditioned Araneta Coliseum with 52 quality fights lined up. Among the favorites are the entries of former DILG undersecretary Jun Santiago (Thunderbird Firefly 13) which is currently on a winning streak, Eddie Araneta (Iloilo Coliseum Liza Galore), Rep. Rudy Albano (Mulawin A. Jimafer), newspaper publisher Butch Macasaet (Greenwood Bablbina), John Capinpin (J-Cap), Dicky Lim (Winslet Paniqui), among others. Meanwhile, the next NCA derbies (7-cock) are scheduled on May 4 and 6 (Dicky Lim and Max Roxas); May 18 and 20 (John Capinpin, Pol Estrellado and Boy Royo); June 1 and 3 (Rene Medina, Ric de Guzman and Alex Tang) and June 8 and 10 (Ronnie Puno). For inquiries, please contact 911-3101 and 911-2928 (look for Gloria Avena).

Bonds homers but Giants lose

SAN FRANCISCO—Barry Bonds homered in his seventh straight game Tuesday to give him 667 for his career, but the San Francisco Giants found themselves with a familiar result: a 9-5 loss to the San Diego Padres. "It doesn't matter. We're losing," Bonds said. He is one short of matching the major league record for consecutive games with a home run—shared by Dale Long (1956), Don Mattingly (1987) and Ken Griffey Jr. (1993). Bonds has homered in the last seven games in which he's had an at-bat, but the defending National League-West champions have lost four of those. He had a pinch-hit walk last Wednesday, which does not stop the streak under baseball's rules. *AP*

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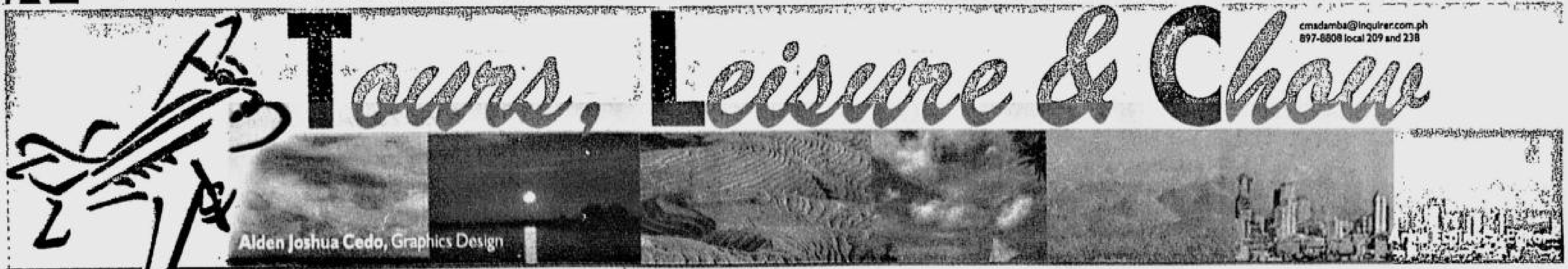
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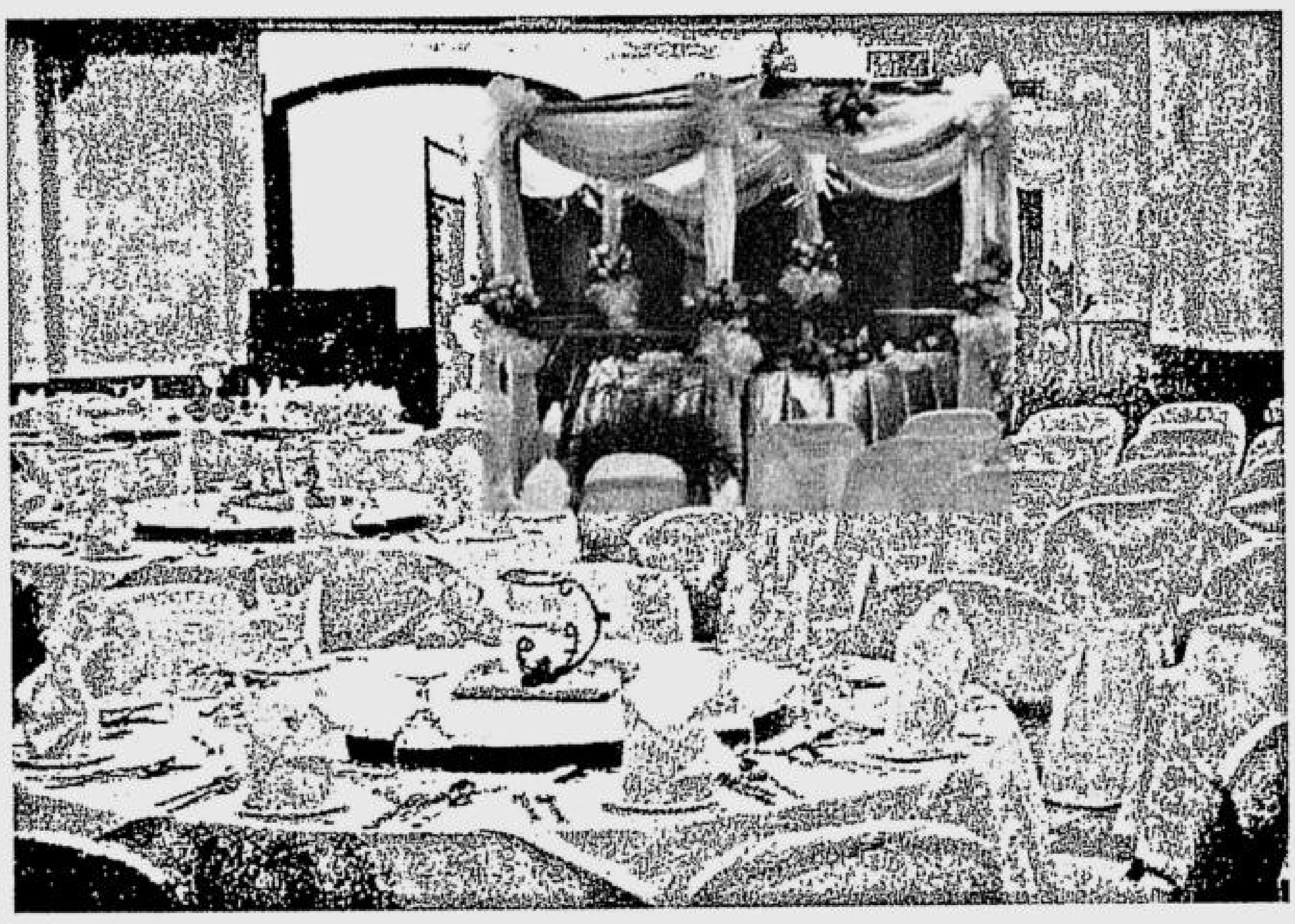
'Zensational Summer Splash' at Astoria Plaza

WELCOME summer by checking into Astoria Plaza's one or two bedroom suites with your family and loved ones. Avail of Astoria Plaza's Zensational Summer Splash Room Promo.

Check into a one-bedroom suite for only P2,450 or a two-bedroom suite for only P3,950 and enjoy Zensational treats like overnight room accommodations with complimentary breakfast, free use of the pool and the gym, complimentary shuttle service to the Ortigas District, complimentary bottled mineral water, free local newspapers and 10 percent discount at Stresscape Spa.

Astoria Plaza's Zensational Summer Splash Room Promo runs from April 1 to June 30. Rates are subject to service charge and government tax.

The Astoria Plaza is managed by Genesis Hotels & Resorts and is conveniently located at 15 J. Escriva Drive, Ortigas Business District, Pasig City. For inquiries and reservations please visit, call 687-1111, or check out www.astoriaplaza.com.



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Hotel Supreme
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Skyrise Hotel
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J. Palma Gil St. Davao City
Tel. (082) 225-8888/fax (082) 225-1888

Camp John Hay Manor
Loakan Road, Baguio City
Tel. (074) 446-0231 to 50

City Travel Hotel
15 Kisad Road, Baguio City
Tel. (074) 445-0456 / Fax (074) 445-0457

Cooyeesan Hotel Plaza
Naguilian cor. Asin Road, Baguio City
Tel. (074) 447-8888 to 93/ (074) 447-8895 to 98
Fax. (074) 447-0494

Golden Pine Hotel and Restaurant
Intersection of Carino St. and Legarda
Road, Baguio City
Tel. (074)444-9970 to 71/740-8975/
Fax. (074) 446-0704
Email: goldenpineholte@skyinet.net

Somerset Salcedo, Makati
H.V. dela Costa St., cor. L.P. Levista St., Salcedo Village, 1227 Makati City
Tel. 888-6668 Fax: 888-6655

Somerset Millennium, Makati
No. 104 Aguirre St., Legaspi Village, 1229
Makati City
Tel. 888-0505 Fax: 812-7721

Somerset Olympia, Makati
No. 7912, Makati Ave., 1220 Makati City
Tel. 812-1010 Fax: 818-8254

All-in-one at Evercrest Golf Club Resort

NOT all hotels have golf courses and not all golf clubs have exemplary hotel facilities. A site that will truly fascinate is the Evercrest Golf Club Resort situated 72 kilometers south of Manila and within Batulao in Nasugbu, Batangas, an easy two-hour southbound drive from Manila. The resort also has a panoramic view of Taal Volcano and Batangas Bay.

Evercrest Golf Club Resort is a prime location for golfers with its 18-hole championship course. It is a perfect venue for conferences, meetings and events, with function rooms that fit requirements of different sizes. This haven is also suitable for private celebrations, weddings and parties. Its closeness to Tagaytay is a tempting treat for tourists, balikbayans and local residents, especially in the summer.

Sixty-seven luxuriously furnished deluxe rooms, eight junior suites and a presidential suite all overlook the golf course, spelling charm and elegance.

Diners may try El Patio Restaurant's sumptuous all-day dining. Or enjoy the game room and the bar to complete one's recreational experience. Other services and facilities include room service, massage, sauna, hot and cold jacuzzis.

For inquiries and reservations, call 733-3822, 733-9955, 733-9593 or 7129293 to 98.

President Arroyo at Waterfront

WATERFRONT Cebu City Hotel & Casino's marketing communications officer Renee Villasin, President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo and marketing communications assistant Arbie Rodriguez.

WATERFRONT Cebu City Hotel & Casino was the official abode of some Lakas NUCD candidates led by no less than President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo last March 26.

It was a busy day for the hotel as local supporters and other candidates of the party flocked in to show their support. Aside from campaigning for the upcoming election, the President was the keynote speaker at the recent induction the Cebu Chamber of Commerce and Industry's officers. Her appearance on the television show Impact 2004 was taped at the Waterfront Cebu City Hotel and Casino's executive suite.

The Bellevue Spa Club features 'Mercedes Benz of treadmills'

THE BELLEVUE Hotel, Alabang's first full-service leisure and business hotel, introduces state-of-the-art fitness technology by using Woodway treadmills in its Bellevue Spa Club.

President George W. Bush and television icon Oprah Winfrey run on Woodway treadmills. The same treadmills are also used in the training rooms of 26 National Football League franchises, 19 Major League Baseball clubs, 17 National Basketball Association teams, 22 NCAA universities, 29 U.S. military installations and on 12 U.S. Navy ships.

Woodway USA is known in the fitness world for manufacturing "the Mercedes-Benz of treadmills". Professional sports team trainers prefer Woodway's ball-bearing treadmill design over conventional treadmill conveyor-belt designs because the Woodway machine is easier on bones, joints, muscles and tendons.

The Bellevue Spa Club welcomed Woodway USA representative Brian Gellendin who trained spa club personnel on the maintenance and troubleshooting of the machines.

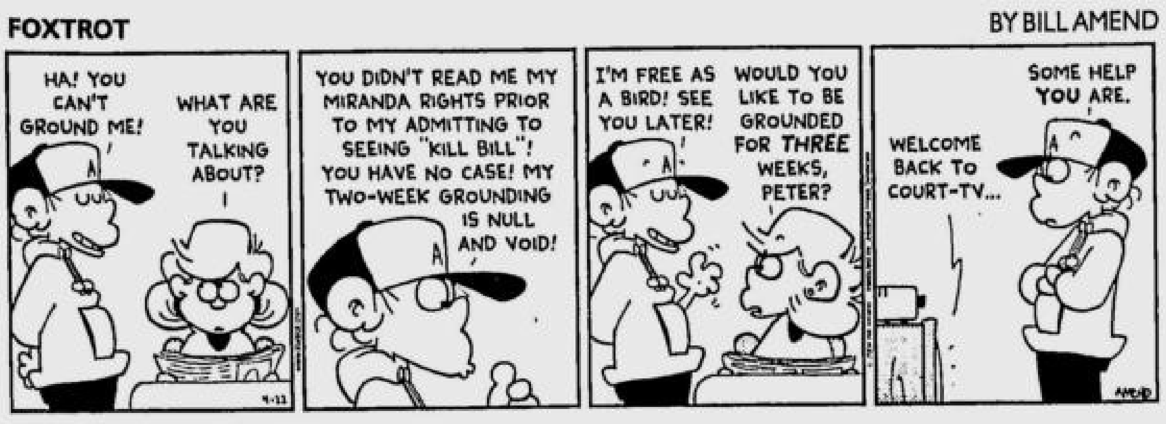
"The Bellevue Hotel is one of the few hotels who recognize the importance of safety in workouts. As a company committed to personalized service, we make sure there is no downtime and that our clients know that they made a good investment by choosing Woodway treadmills," Gellendin said.

Alabang's trendy set have already discovered the many high-tech machines at the Bellevue Spa Club's gym. The Club also has a luxuriously-appointed spa with a wide selection of Eastern and Western spa treatments as well as a modern salon with expert stylists. For inquiries, call 771-8181.

WOODWAY'S Brian Gellendin (middle) was welcomed by (from left) The Bellevue Hotel general manager Cyndy Tan-Jarabata, executive assistant manager Patrick Chan, events manager Mina Sabino and Marjorie Lopingco.

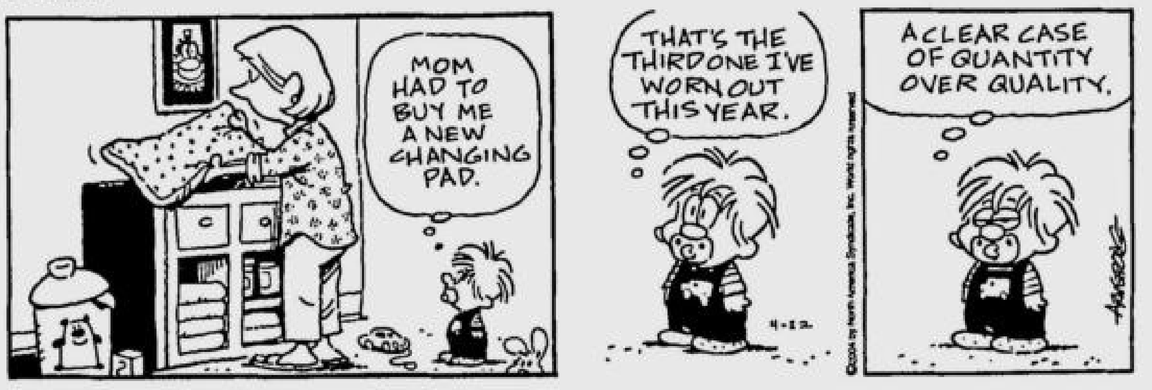
FOXTROT

BY BILL AMEND


HA! YOU CAN'T GROUND ME!
WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?
YOU DIDN'T READ ME MY MIRANDA RIGHTS PRIOR TO MY ADMITTING TO SEEING "KILL BILL"! YOU HAVE NO CASE! MY TWO-WEEK GROUNDING IS NULL AND VOID!
I'M FREE AS A BIRD! SEE YOU LATER!
WOULD YOU LIKE TO BE GROUNDED FOR THREE WEEKS, PETER?
WELCOME BACK TO COURT-TV...
SOME HELP YOU ARE.

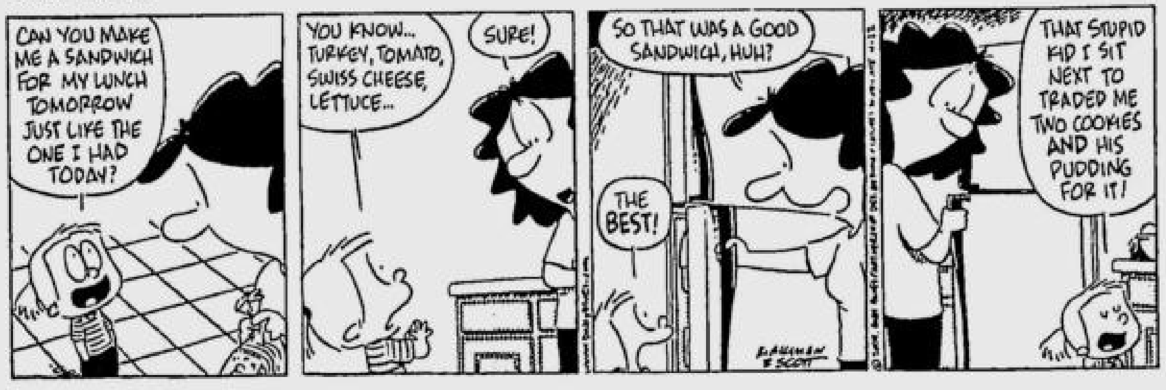
MARVIN

BY TOM ARMSTRONG


MOM HAD TO BUY ME A NEW CHANGING PAD.
THAT'S THE THIRD ONE I'VE WORN OUT THIS YEAR.
A CLEAR CASE OF QUANTITY OVER QUALITY.

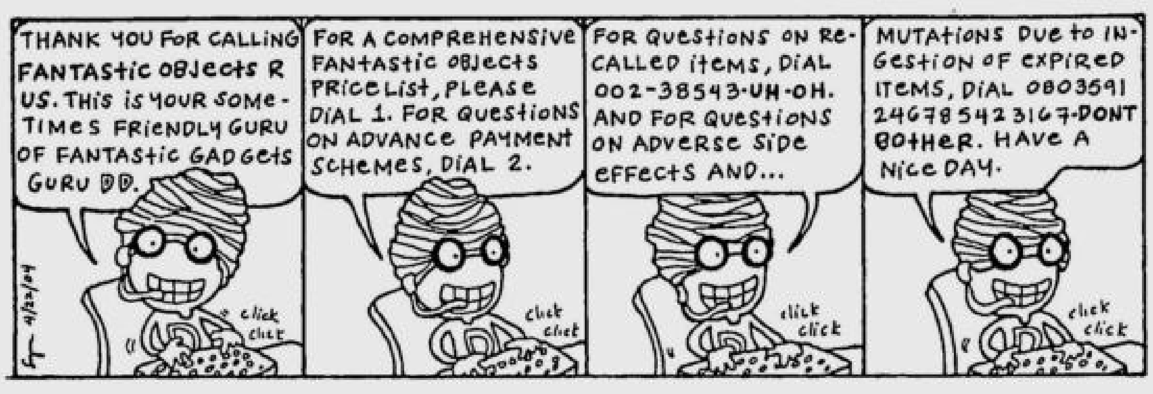
BABY BLUES

BY JERRY SCOTT


CAN YOU MAKE ME A SANDWICH FOR MY LUNCH TOMORROW JUST LIKE THE ONE I HAD TODAY?
YOU KNOW... TURKEY, TOMATO, SWISS CHEESE, LETTUCE...
SURE!
SO THAT WAS A GOOD SANDWICH, HUH?
THE BEST!
THAT STUPID KID I SIT NEXT TO TRADED ME TWO COOKIES AND HIS PUDDING FOR IT!

ATOMO AND WEBOY

BY LYRA GARCELLANO


THANK YOU FOR CALLING FANTASTIC OBJECTS R US. THIS IS YOUR SOMETIMES FRIENDLY GURU OF FANTASTIC GADGETS GURU DD.
FOR A COMPREHENSIVE FANTASTIC OBJECTS PRICELIST, PLEASE DIAL 1. FOR QUESTIONS ON ADVANCE PAYMENT SCHEMES, DIAL 2.
FOR QUESTIONS ON RECALLED ITEMS, DIAL 002-38543-UH-OH. AND FOR QUESTIONS ON ADVERSE SIDE EFFECTS AND...
MUTATIONS DUE TO INGESTION OF EXPIRED ITEMS, DIAL 0803591 24678542316 7-DONT BOTHER. HAVE A NICE DAY.
click click
click click
click click
click click

HOROSCOPE

BY FRANCIS DRAKE

YOU BORN TODAY: You are down-to-earth, practical and very organized. When you do something, you do it professionally. Privately, you are quiet, and you often seek your own seclusion. Many of you establish family businesses. You need encouragement, not criticism. Others always respect you. Major changes (perhaps as significant as in 1995) will take place this year.
Birthdate of: Peter Frampton, musician; Aaron Spelling, producer/director; Jack Nicholson, actor.

ARIES (March 21 to April 19): Expect a few surprises at work today. Don't be afraid; they might benefit you. A friend or casual acquaintance might even shock you.

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20): Impulse buying grips you by the throat today. (Remember how keen you are to buy beautiful things right now?) This is not the ideal frame of mind in which to spend money.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20): You feel excited and nervous . The Moon is in your sign, making strong aspects to Uranus and Jupiter. This means that practically anything can happen.

CANCER (June 21 to July 22): Think twice before you open your mouth today. You could blurt out something rash and later regret it. (That's because your feelings guide you as much as your mind does.)

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22): Bizarre characters might cross your path today. However, don't let things get out of hand. And don't let anyone talk you into anything you don't want to do.

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22): Bosses, parents and close partners are all possible sources of surprise and amazement for you today. Just when you think you're beginning to get to know someone: Whammo! (Go figure.)

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22): You might change your belief system or modify your stance on something today. Not only will you surprise others, but you'll surprise yourself! (It's healthy to have an open mind.)

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21): Glitches in computers and technology could delay things at work today. Surprise dealings with someone from afar or from a different culture are likely. Be prepared.

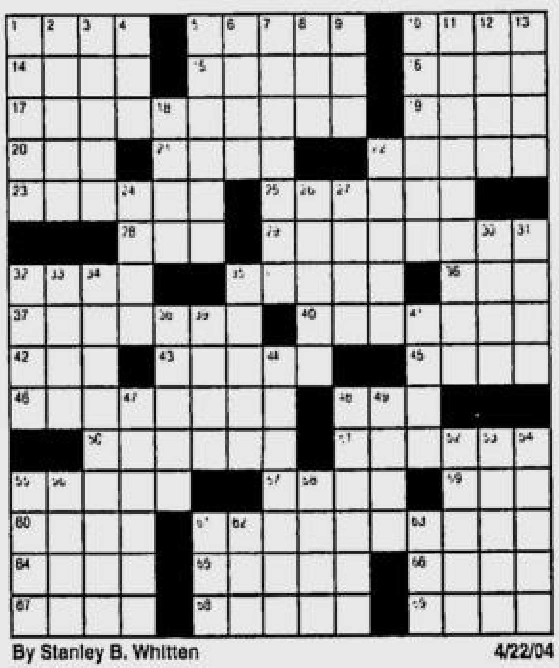
SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21): In a way, you just have to go along for the ride today. People will make unusual suggestions, and it's not worth fighting about it. Just fall in line.
s

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19): Be careful about promises and commitments you make at work today. Don't be overly optimistic. Give yourself leeway to redo things or handle delays.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18): Be extra-vigilant taking care of children today. A mild accident-prone influence is present. It's easy to lose sight of a toddler, for example. Stay alert to avoid mishaps.

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20): Appliance breakdowns and broken machinery at home could cause you delays today. These are minor. Nevertheless, remember the adage: "A stitch in time saves nine."

DAILY CROSSWORD



By Stanley B. Whitten
Highwood, IL

4/22/04

ACROSS
1 Happy mollusk?
5 Russian villa
10 Put-up job
14 Top-notch
15 Immigration island
16 In addition
17 Pioneer filmmaker
19 Old World duck
20 Sniggler's prey
21 Paper quantity
22 Large flightless birds
23 Rock-boring tool
25 Dantley of the NBA
28 Moreover
29 Tot's bike
32 Romanov title
35 Terminate
36 Baby fox
37 Type of general
40 Make turbulent
42 __-jongg
43 Burst out
45 Feed the kitty
46 More lovey-dovey
48 19th letter
50 Make current
51 Nixes
55 Pants
57 Do the crawl
59 Baseball stat
60 Chauffeur-driven wheels
61 "The Catcher in the Rye" author
64 McKinley and Lupino
65 Perfect
66 Naked
67 Deadly poison
68 Clemency
69 Picnic pests

DOWN
1 Military student
2 Drop down
3 Go fishing
4 Mal de __
5 Protect
6 __-Romeo (Italian car)
7 Prevailing condition
8 Broadway success
9 Cigar end
10 Strut nonchalantly
11 "American Mercury" founder
12 On the briny
13 Cuts the lawn
18 Persia, today
22 Kitchen gadget
24 Links norms
26 Preliminary version
27 __ and shine!
30 Fluff
31 Major conclusion?
32 Male turkeys
33 Crackle and Pop's pal
34 "A Shropshire Lad" poet
35 Salad-service piece
38 Takes care of
39 Opera song
41 Ship's pole
44 Iron worker?
47 Go against
48 In a fiendish way
49 Tractor-trailer
52 Church instrument
53 Film-critic Roger
54 Fathers
55 Slickly nonchalant
56 Verdi opera
58 Female military grp.
61 Backus or Bakker
62 Ike, initially
63 Cagers' org.

Wednesday's Puzzle Solved

S	O	F	A	R		A	G	A	R	S		C	P	A
A	M	U	S	E		P	I	V	O	T		H	U	M
W	I	R	E	S	E	R	V	I	C	E		A	R	I
S	T	Y		T	R	I	E	D		A	C	R	E	S
			B	A	I	L	S		I	M	A	G	E	S
V	A	C	A	T	E			S	T	Y	L	E		
E	L	U	D	E		P	E	T	E		I	C	E	S
S	O	R	T		H	O	K	U	M		C	A	R	A
T	E	R	I		I	K	E	S		P	O	R	G	Y
		E	M	P	T	Y			C	R	E	D	O	S
L	O	N	E	R	S		H	O	L	E	S			
A	R	T	S	Y		S	E	P	O	Y		W	I	Z
T	A	J		O	U	T	L	E	T	S	T	O	R	E
E	T	O		U	N	I	O	N		O	W	N	E	R
R	E	B		T	O	R	T	S		N	O	T	S	O

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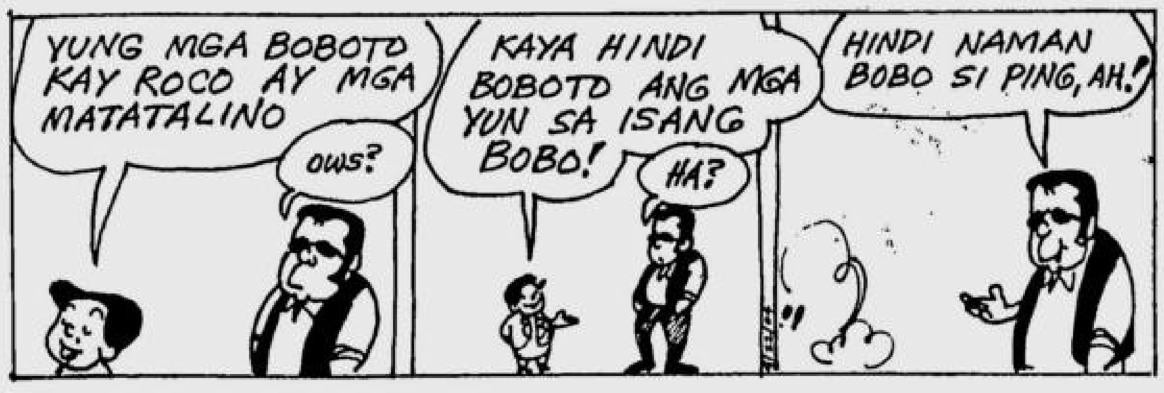
4/22/04

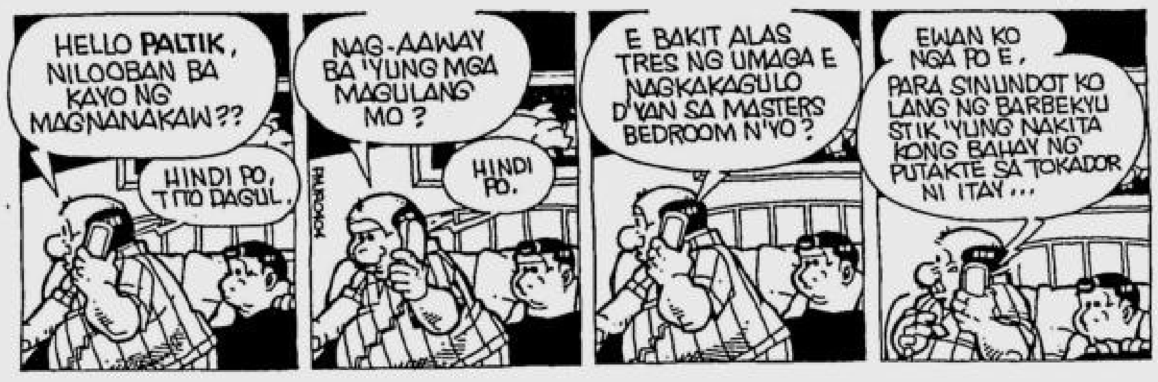
A. LIPIN

BY JESS ABRERA


YUNG MGA BOBOTO KAY ROCO AY MGA MATATALINO
OWS?
KAYA HINDI BOBOTO ANG MGA YUN SA ISANG BOBO!
HA?
HINDI NAMAN BOBO SI PING, AH!

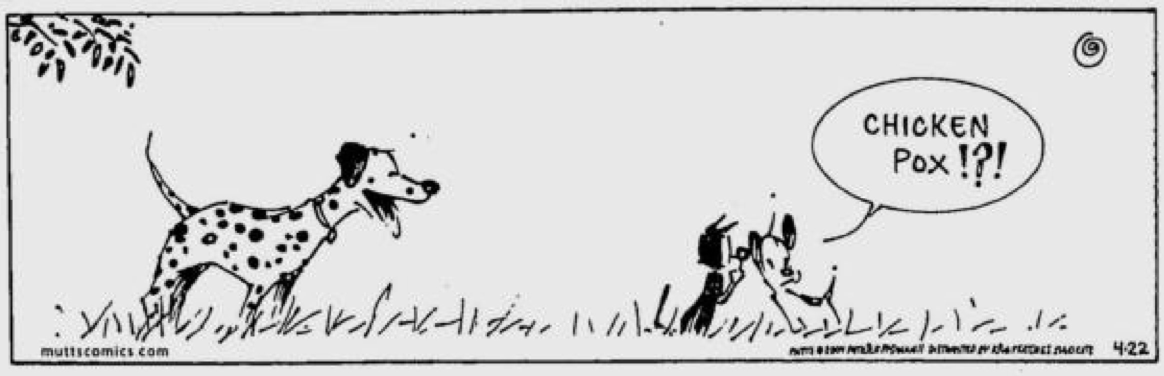
PUGAD BABOY

BY P.M. JUNIOR


HELLO PALTIK, NILOOBAN BA KAYO NG MAGNANAKAW??
HINDI PO, TITO DAGUL.
NAG-AAWAY BA 'YUNG MGA MAGULANG MO?
HINDI PO.
E BAKIT ALAS TRES NG UMAGA E NAGKAKAGULO D'YAN SA MASTERS BEDROOM N'YO?
EWAN KO NGA PO E. PARA SINUNDOT KO LANG NG BARBEKYU STIK 'YUNG NAKITA KONG BAHAY NG PUTAKTE SA TOKADOR NI ITAY...

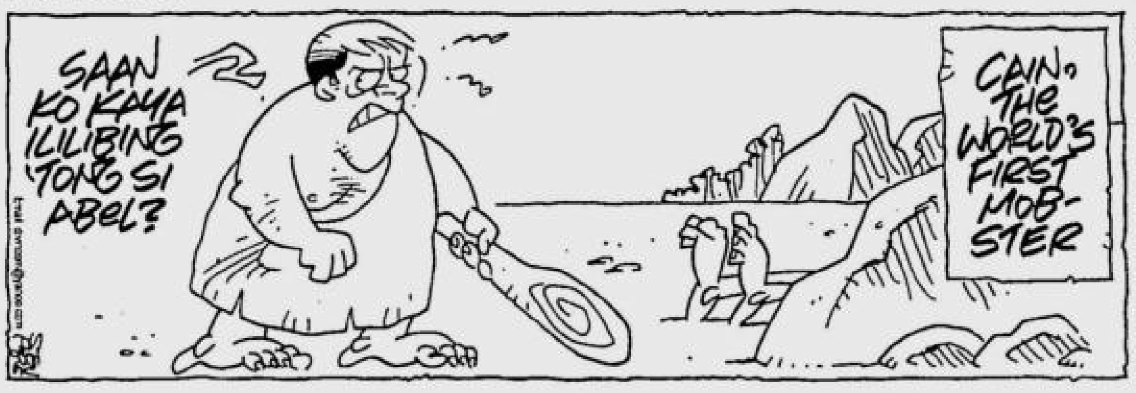
MUTTS

BY PATRICK McDONNELL


CHICKEN Pox !?!
muttscomics.com
4-22

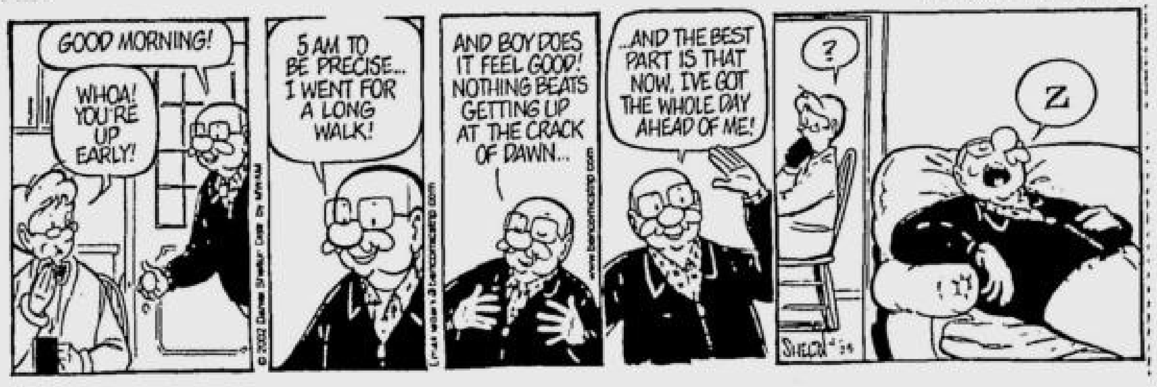
DIVINE COMEDY

BY STEVEN PABALINAS


SAAN KO KAYA ILILIBING 'TONG SI ABEL?
CAIN, THE WORLD'S FIRST MOBSTER

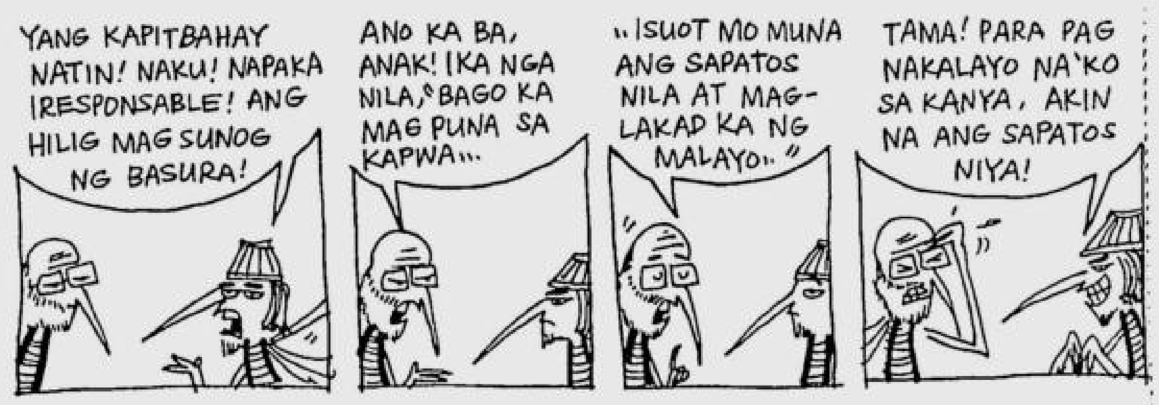
BEN

BY DANIEL SHELTON


GOOD MORNING!
WHOA! YOU'RE UP EARLY!
5 AM TO BE PRECISE... I WENT FOR A LONG WALK!
AND BOY DOES IT FEEL GOOD! NOTHING BEATS GETTING UP AT THE CRACK OF DAWN...
...AND THE BEST PART IS THAT NOW, I'VE GOT THE WHOLE DAY AHEAD OF ME!
?
Z

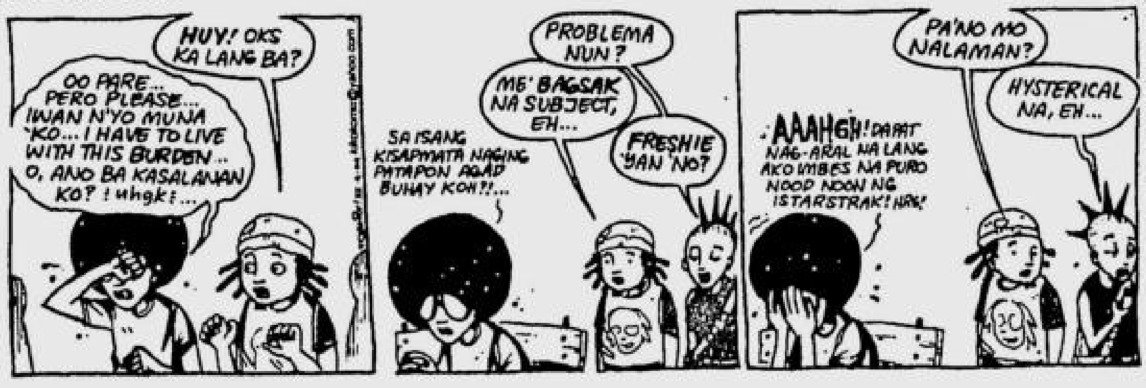
MIKROKOSMOS

BY JOMIKE TEJIDO


YANG KAPITBAHAY NATIN! NAKU! NAPAKA IRESPONSABLE! ANG HILIG MAG SUNOG NG BASURA!
ANO KA BA, ANAK! IKA NGA NILA, "BAGO KA MAG PUNA SA KAPWA...
..ISUOT MO MUNA ANG SAPATOS NILA AT MAGLAKAD KA NG MALAYO.."
TAMA! PARA PAG NAKALAYO NA'KO SA KANYA, AKIN NA ANG SAPATOS NIYA!

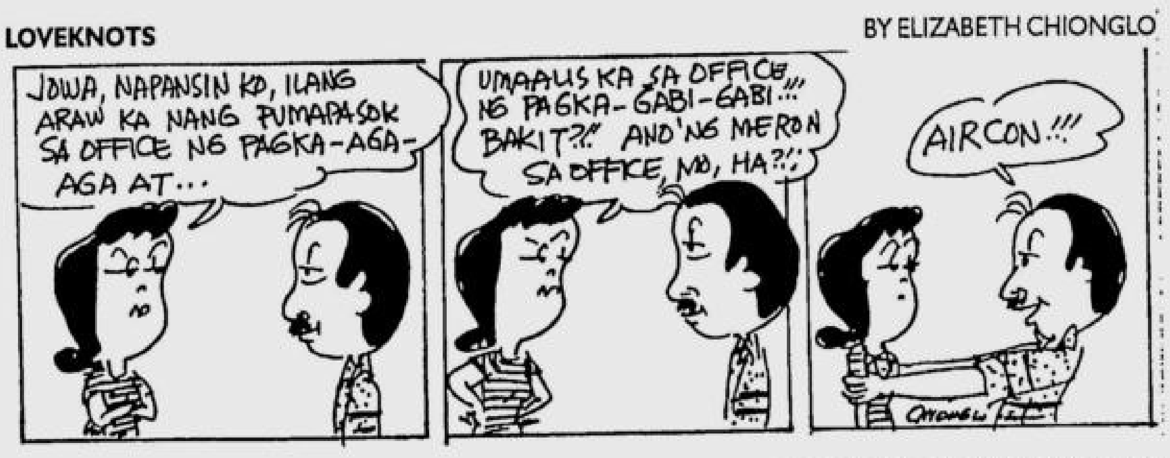
KIKO MACHINE

BY MANIX ABRERA


HUY! OKS KA LANG BA?
OO PARE... PERO PLEASE... IWAN N'YO MUNA 'KO... I HAVE TO LIVE WITH THIS BURDEN.. O, ANO BA KASALANAN KO? !uhgk!...
PROBLEMA NUN?
ME' BAGSAK NA SUBJECT, EH...
SA ISANG KISAPMATA NAGING PATAPON AGAD BUHAY KOH?!...
FRESHIE 'YAN NO?
PA'NO MO NALAMAN?
HYSTERICAL NA, EH...
AAAHGH! DAPAT NAG-ARAL NA LANG AKO IMBES NA PURO NOOD NOON NG ISTARSTRAK! HRK!

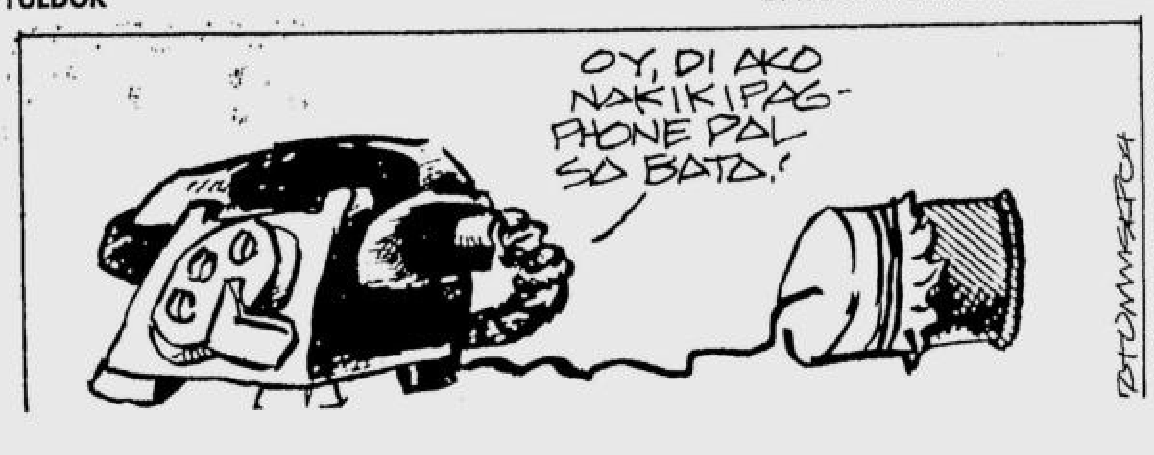
LOVEKNOTS

BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


JOWA, NAPANSIN KO, ILANG ARAW KA NANG PUMAPASOK SA OFFICE NG PAGKA-AGA-AGA AT...
UMAALIS KA SA OFFICE NG PAGKA-GABI-GABI...!! BAKIT?!" AND'NG MERON SA OFFICE, MO, HA?!
AIRCON.!!!

TULDOK

BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBILING


OY, DI AKO NAKIKIPAG-PHONE PAL SA BATA!

Kris visits Mark Lapid in hospital

By Tonette Orejas
PDI Central Luzon Desk

CITY OF SAN FERNANDO—Television host Kris Aquino sneaked into the hospital room of her rumored suitor, Pampanga gubernatorial aspirant Mark Lapid, at about 2 a.m. on Wednesday.

Mark, who was confined on Tuesday at the V.L. Makabali Memorial Hospital here for fatigue and polycythemia, a condition where a person has excessive red blood cells, said Kris, 32, was accompanied by an aide and stayed for two hours.

"It was a surprise visit. She woke me up," Mark, son of incumbent Gov. Manuel "Lito" Lapid, told the INQUIRER.

Mark, 25, said he had to cancel campaign sorties, meetings and an appearance in the local voters' education program "Ang Plataporma Ko" on Thursday because he was weak.

Kris' visit, the young Lapid said, "inspired me to recover fast."

When asked about the details of the visit, he said, "*Sa amin na lang po yun, ma'am* (That's between us, ma'am)."

The hospital's staff confirmed Kris' visit. A staffer said Aquino brought Mark five dozens of white roses and three baskets of assorted fresh fruits. This writer saw the gifts. Only Mark and Kris were in the room during her visit.

Mark described Kris as "kind, thoughtful and honest."

Eric: I don't want to see …

From page A26

and managing a restaurant or a private resort of my own."

Eric plays a gay lover in "I Will Survive," a comedy film directed by Joel Lamangan. He stars with Maricel Soriano, Dina Bonnevie and Judy Ann Santos.

"We all have our stories to tell, but mine is quite unique," Eric said of his character. "Unlike the women, I was never married. I adopted two kids, and the eldest (Jay Aquitania) is suspecting that I am gay.

The 37-year-old actor has appeared in 70 films and has won various acting awards, the most recent of which is the 2003 Metro Manila Film Festival best actor award for Mark Meily's "Crying Ladies."

King: Not just Nina's Kuya

By Oliver M. Pulumbarit
Contributor

JUMPING on the bandwagon of one-named performers, 25-year-old singer King claims that the nickname has been one that he has been called since he was a boy. It just seems easier to recall than his real name, Filbert Girado Jr., now that he's a recording artist.

King is also known as the older sibling of his popular, one-named younger sister, "Soul Siren" Nina. He doesn't take it negatively, he claims, when people opine that he owes his fame to her.

"But it's true, four years ago, she forced me to join her band, M.Y.M.P. (Make Your Momma Proud), as alternating vocalist. We don't have any sibling rivalry, because she was the one who dragged me into singing *talaga*. Her success is also my success. I'm happy with all her achievements and the hit songs she's making," he says.

KING says he's his own person.

His own person

King says he's his own person anyway. But he understands it's easier for people to remember him that way, at first: "Hopefully, in the future, I'll be able to get out of the shadow of my sister, and be known as King, 'The Edge of R&B' (his current given moniker). Not just 'Nina's brother.'"

He reveals that he was into dancing before he really went into singing, but he could always carry a tune. Growing up in a musically attuned family became a training ground of sorts. "My dad used to sing at the Philippine Embassy every time he's abroad. He was a member of the Bayanihan Vocal Group. And my mom can play a lot of musical instruments. All my siblings can sing. My dad would make us a stage where we can sing in our own programs."

Record deal

King shares that he may have become a doctor by now had things happened differently: "I was a Medical Technology student at Far Eastern University, and when I finished, I became a marketing manager at a popular fast food joint. I joined Nina's band, and after it disbanded, I joined a boy group that also disbanded. I put together my own boy group, but that didn't work out."

He eventually landed a recording deal with Star Records that would build him up as a solo artist instead. His first song is a remake of the popular Neocolours hit, "Maybe," released in a recent compilation album, "Solo." That featured him, as well as two other budding singers, Divo and Josh Santana. The song is now one of the ten tracks in his debut effort, "The Reason I Exist."

He can relate to "Maybe" because, the singer with the transfixed smile says, "It reminds me of a girl in school that I really liked, but for some reason she didn't really like me."

Still, King admits that while he doesn't have a girlfriend, he is very happy with listeners who have become fans, including five-year-old girls, screaming adolescent girls, older women, and gay guys.

2 knights

King constantly finds inspiration in two 'knightly' foreign artists, Jordan Knight and Bryan McKnight, and hopes to be respected as "a good, quality performer" like his local idol, Gary Valenciano, a few years from now. Only a few years back, he adds, he only names two people as his biggest singing heroes: His father and Nina.

He considers himself an ordinary guy who doesn't have any real vices. "*Wala, eh. Siguro*, shopping. Shopping for anything. I have collections of crowns, Union Jacks and Astro Boys. Jewelry, patches, shirts, anything with them on it," he says, while showing a pair of identical rings shaped like stylized crowns he was wearing.

The young man explains that he is lucky that he is able to express himself, and not forced to maintain a manufactured veneer: "What I really wanted to be is myself. It would be hard for me if I had pretensions or if I suppressed myself. You can see who I really am."

SeeMall!
AYALA CENTER
ALABANG TOWN
AYALA CENTER CEBU
LoveMall!

AYALA CINEMAS

	ATC ALABANG TOWN CENTER	G1 GLORIETTA 1	G4 GLORIETTA 4	GB3 GREENBELT 3	ACC AYALA CENTER CEBU
1	HELLBOY	SPARTAN	SPARTAN	GUARANTEED SEATS PAYCHECK 1:20, 3:50, 6:20 8:50, 11:20	LOVE ACTUALLY
2	SPARTAN	HELLBOY	BIG FISH	GUARANTEED SEATS HELLBOY 12:40, 3:25, 6:00 8:35, 11:10	TAKING LIVES
3	PAYCHECK	PAYCHECK	GUARANTEED SEATS PAYCHECK 12:30, 3:00, 5:30 8:00, 10:30	GUARANTEED SEATS TAKING LIVES 2:50, 5:00, 7:10 9:20, 11:30	PASSION OF THE CHRIST
4	PASSION OF THE CHRIST	MASIKIP SA DIBDIB	IMAGINING ARGENTINA	GUARANTEED SEATS BIG FISH 12:50, 3:30, 6:10 8:50, 11:30	GRUDGE 2
5	PETER PAN		PASSION OF THE CHRIST	GUARANTEED SEATS PASSION OF THE CHRIST 1:30, 4:00, 6:30 9:00, 11:30	50 FIRST DATES
6			HELLBOY		
7			TAKING LIVES		

GB1 GREENBELT 1	
1	BIG FISH 1:35, 4:15, 6:55 9:35
2	HELLBOY 11:55, 2:20, 4:45, 7:10 9:35

ENTERTAINMENT LIVE!

GLORIETTA	GREENBELT
HARD ROCK CAFÉ, GLORIETTA 3 featuring SERENITY (9:30pm)	MERK'S: Happy Hour - Mae; Silk & Steel TAVERN ON THE SQUARE: Streamline (9:30 pm)

At the Activity Center

GLORIETTA	ALABANG TOWN CENTER	AYALA CENTER CEBU
PHILIPPINE FASHION WEEK April 21 to 30, 2004	NICKELODEON'S SPONGEBOB SQUAREPANTS: BIKINI BOTTOM BASH April 23 to 25; 11:00am, 3:00pm, 6:00pm	TV ESKWELA SHOW April 24, 2004

Onstage
REP'S GLOBE THEATER presents REPERTORY'S CAUGHT IN THE NET
April 23, 24, 25 & 30

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Clients defend Dr. Vicki Belo

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Fresh approach to an old fairy tale

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

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An additional advantage is the genuine boyish exuberance and braggadocio that the boy (**Jeremy Sumpter**) playing Peter is able to inject into his portrayal. It's a lively and confident performance, too, so Hogan should be complimented for having elicited such exceptional work from his relatively inexperienced new star.

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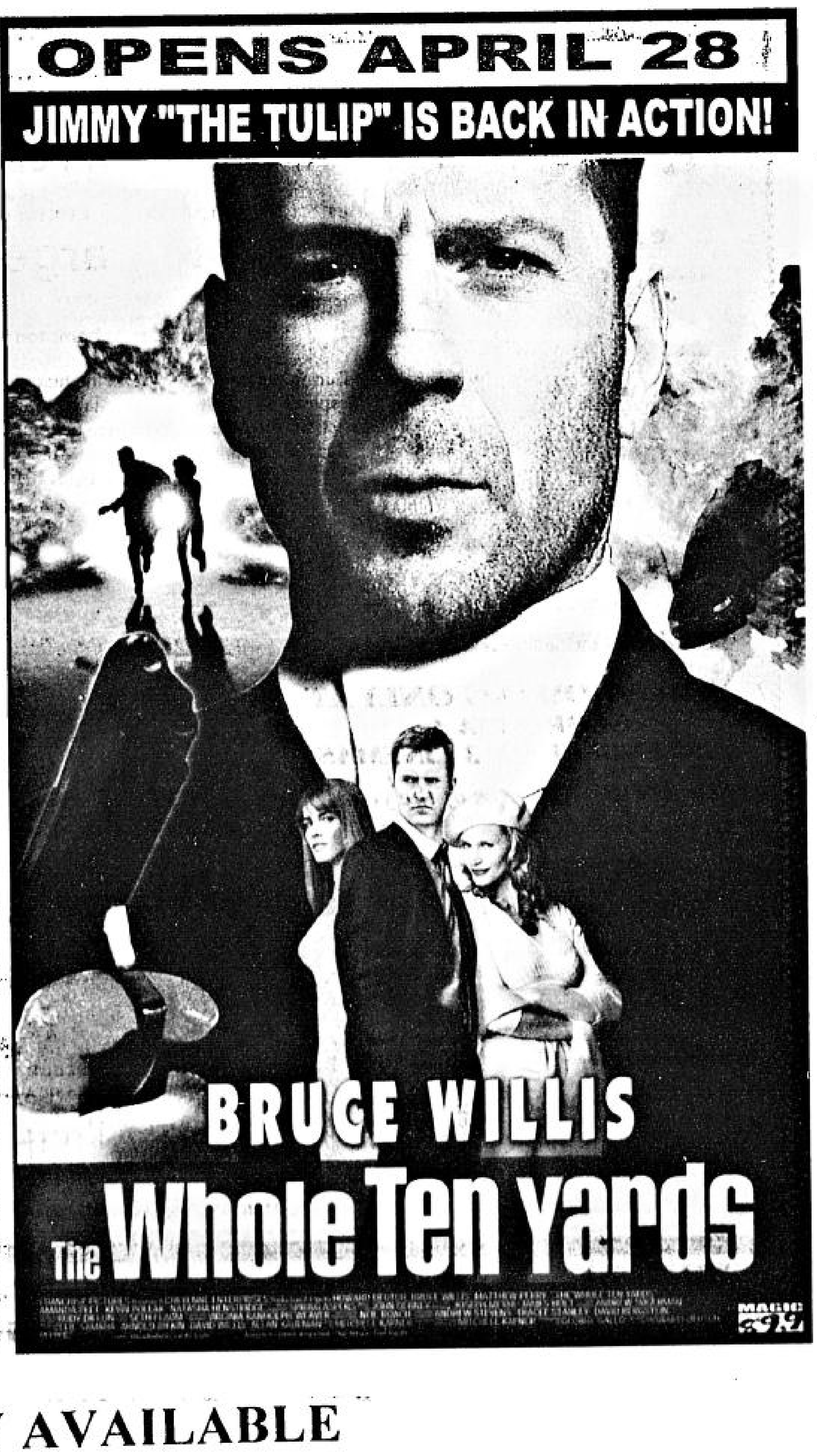
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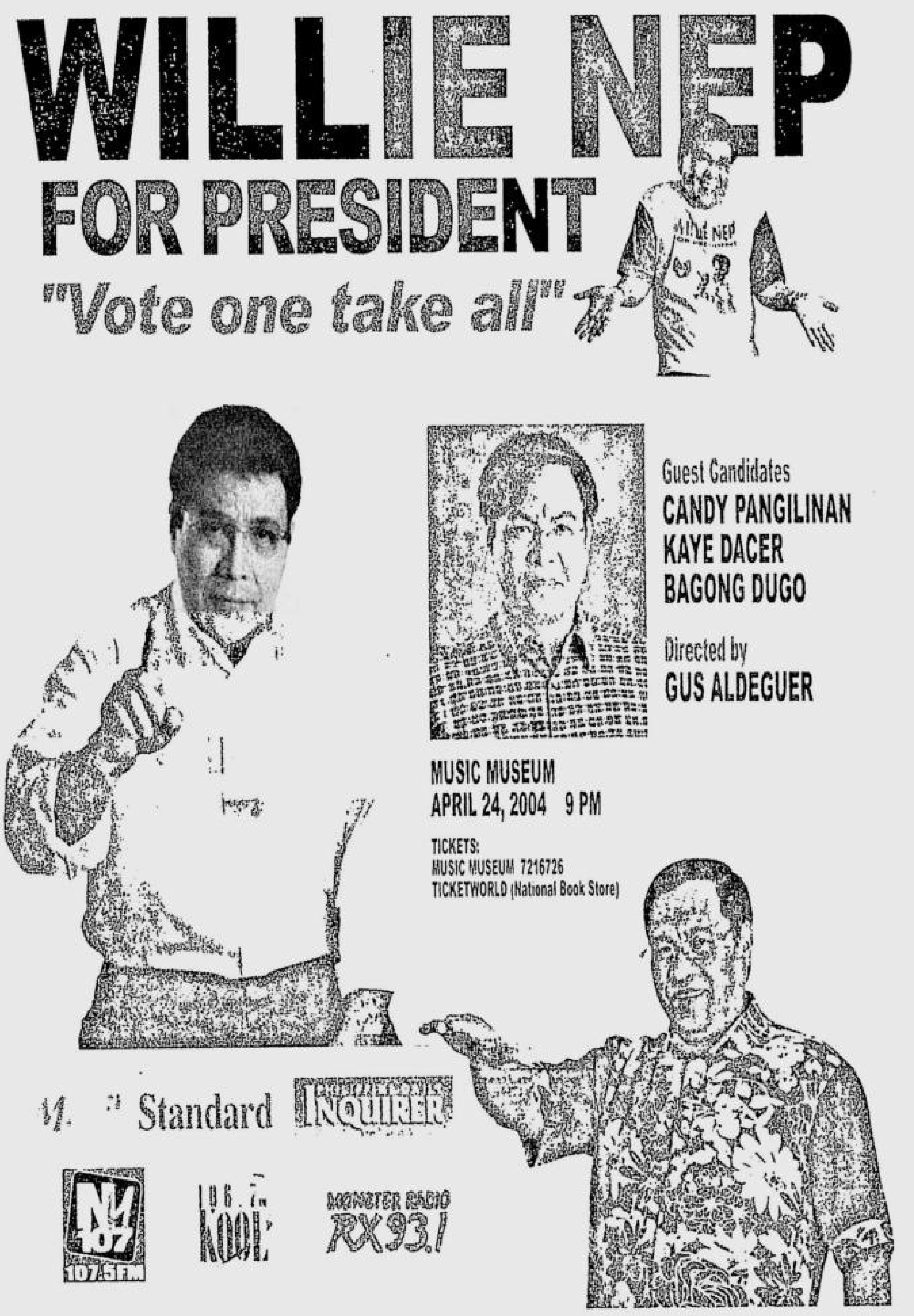

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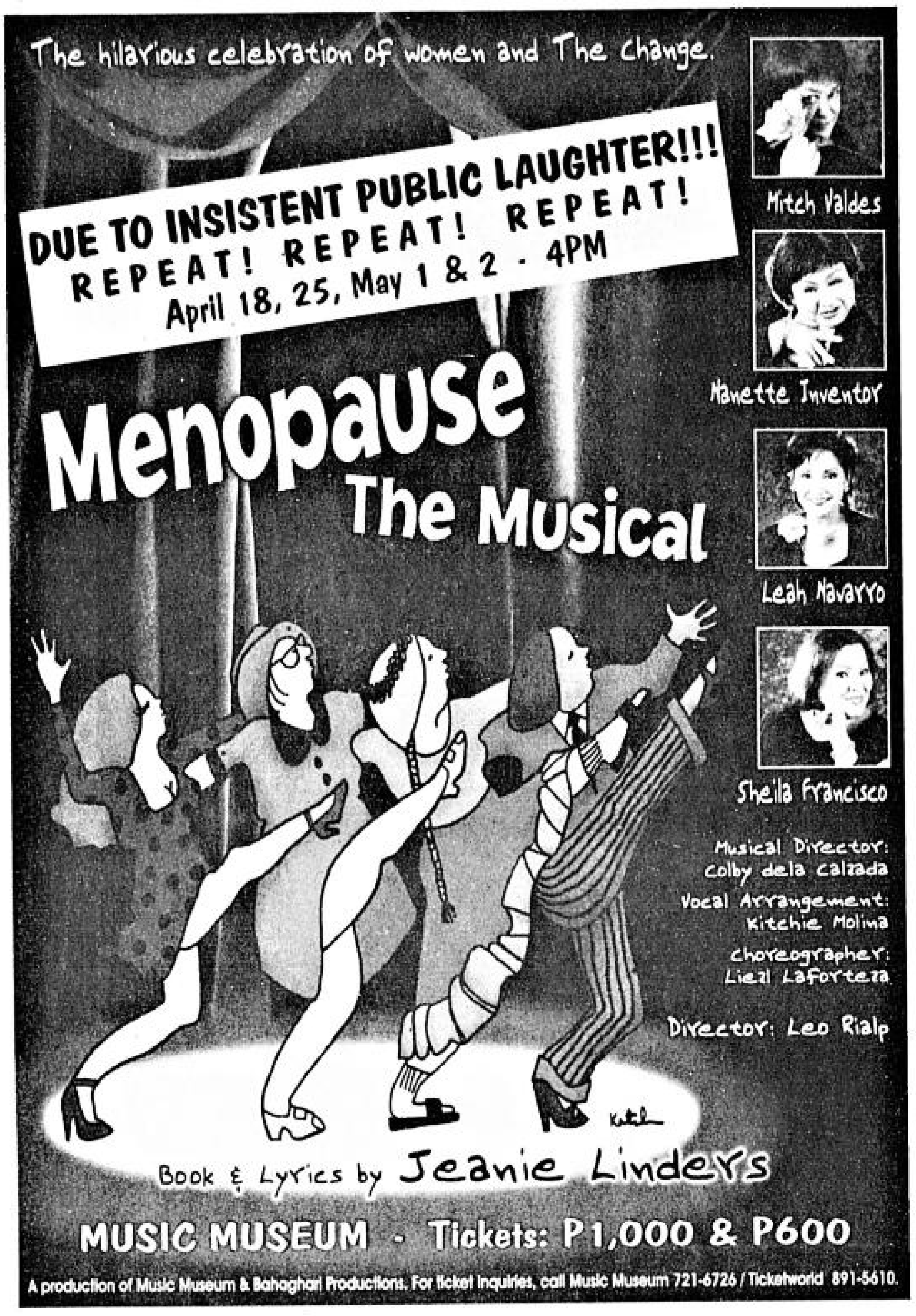
Editor **Louie C. Camino**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Eric: I don't want to see Kris suffering

By Marinel R. Cruz

"THERE are certain things that she should just keep to herself. I don't want to see her suffering."

ERIC Quizon has remained good friends with ex-girlfriend Kris Aquino.

That was actor-director Eric Quizon talking about his former girlfriend, TV host Kris Aquino, who he said should keep some things about her life private.

The actor is apparently referring to a tearful Kris at the show biz talk show "The Buzz" last Sunday wishing her former live-in partner Joey Marquez luck now that his 12-year marriage to actress Alma Moreno has been annulled.

Kris was 16, and Eric 20 when the actor became her first boyfriend,

"We didn't last long because we weren't allowed to see each other," Eric admitted during a press conference for his latest movie "I Will Survive" last Tuesday. "Her mother (Corazon Aquino) was still president at that time."

"*Panakaw-nakaw ang* meeting *namin*," Eric added. "I would visit her in San Agustin School, or in her lola's (Aurora Aquino) in Forbes Park."

Eric, who remains single up to this time, said he and Kris has remain good friends.

"We're better off as friends," he said.

Kris has a 7-year-old love child, Joshua, with actor Phillip Salvador.

Frustrated doctor

Before he became an actor, Eric wanted to become a psychiatrist.

"I've always wanted to be a psychiatrist," he said. "But I have no more desire of going back. I want to move on. I want to do something more relaxing."

He said pursuing medicine, has been "the greatest frustration of my life." But Eric is now content being an actor.

"I'm happy being an actor. But I don't want to act or direct all my life," Eric said.

"I dream of studying culinary arts someday

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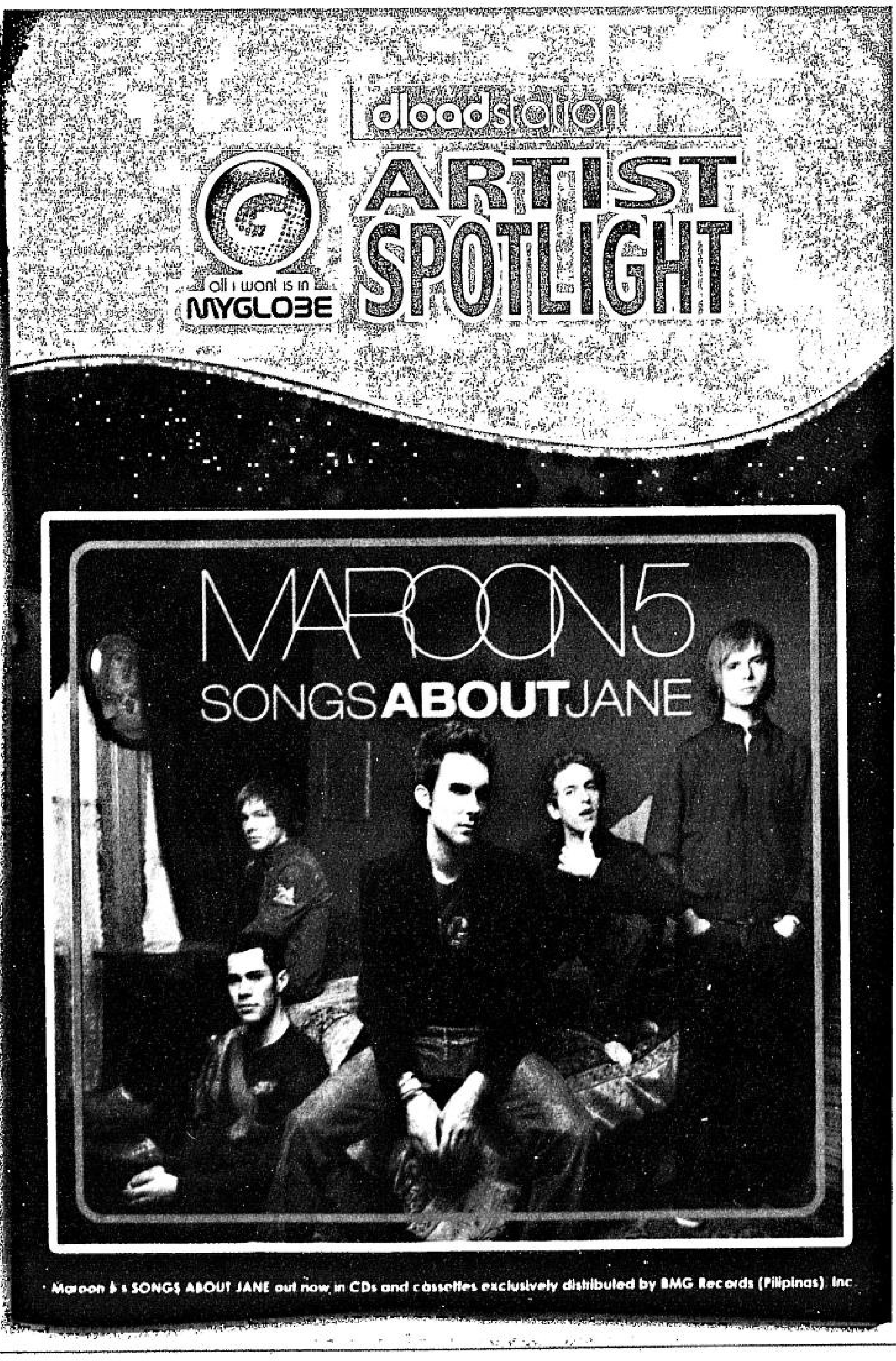
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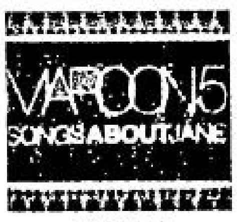

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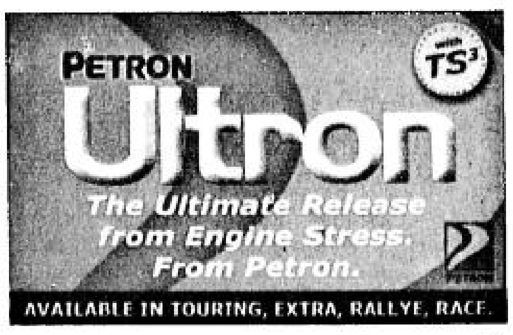
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Sy camp rethinks Equitable PCI buy-in

By Elizabeth L. Sanchez and Doris C. Dumlao

THE CAMP of retail tycoon Henry Sy is rethinking its planned buy-in into third biggest lender Equitable PCI Bank due to the Go family's strong opposition to their entry, a source from the group told the INQUIRER yesterday.

"This (Go family's opposition) is an eye opener. We have to restudy (the buy-in plan) before we go on with the SSS (Social Security System) acquisition," the source added.

The Sy group has less than one board seat in Equitable PCI Bank. "We do have shares but not enough for one seat so we were looking for proxies. But they (the Go family) are looking at it as hostile. So be it. We are studying our options," the source pointed out.

Pension fund Social Security System (SSS) had agreed to sell its 29-percent stake in Equitable PCI to Sy-controlled Banco de Oro Universal Bank. The deal is awaiting clearance from the Department of Justice.

Equitable PCI barred all the nominees of Henry Sy from its 15-member board at the annual meeting of stockholders Tuesday, citing conflict of interest.

The Sy group nominated Exequiel Villacorta, former president of TA Bank; bankers Violeta Lim and Josefina Tan; Rafael Alunan III, former secretary of interior and local government, and Teresita Sy-Coson, chair of Banco de Oro. The bank argued that its bylaws and a precedent set by the Supreme Court allowed it to protect itself by preventing competitors from getting into the board.

A Supreme Court ruling in the 1980s prevented tycoon John Gokongwei from entering the board of food and beverage conglomerate San Miguel Corp. because he had a competing food company, Universal Robina Corp. Two years ago, the management of Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co. had also cited the Supreme Court ruling in opposing a Gokongwei takeover bid, noting his ownership of rival Digital Telecommunications.

The disqualification of Sy's nominees for conflict of interest reasons indicated that Equitable PCI's founders, the Go family, viewed a pending deal between Banco de Oro and the SSS as a hostile takeover attempt.

The Sy camp has protested Equitable PCI's decision to lock out its nominees from the bank's board, arguing that cross-ownership among banks was allowed by Philippine banking laws.

"I don't see why they see us as adversarial. In fact, we're coming in to enhance shareholder value," BDO Capital and Investment Corp. executive vice president Eduardo Francisco yesterday said in an interview.

Francisco said Equitable PCI's ruling must be clarified as it could set a dangerous precedent, especially in view of Banco de Oro's bid to acquire the controlling 29-percent stake held by SSS.

Gov't raises ₱10B from 7-yr bonds

By Michelle V. Remo

THE GOVERNMENT raised P10 billion during yesterday's special issuance of 7-year zero coupon bonds, the proceeds of which will be used to help finance its budget requirements for the year.

The issuance was oversubscribed, indicating a continued appetite of the market for government securities that was observed since last Tuesday. Worth of tenders reached P13.12 billion compared with the government's P10-billion offering.

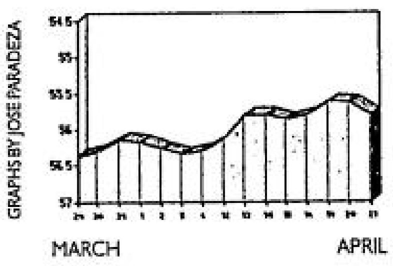
The bond's yield to maturity stood at 11.125 percent, or the same with the rate during its last offering on Dec. 18, 2003, when the government raised P3.5 billion.

Yesterday's auction was the second time the government offered the 7-year zero coupon bond. The government is targeting to raise a total of P50 billion from the issuance of the 7-year zero coupon bonds.

After raising a total of P13.5 billion from the auctions last December and yesterday, the government still has to raise P36.5 billion to meet its scheduled P50-billion borrowing program.

INDICATORS

CURRENCIES



PESO-DOLLAR RATE

₱ 55.81 = $1

As of 5 p.m., April 21, 2004

¥ 108.86 = $ 1

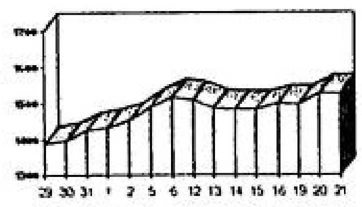
As of 5 p.m., April 21, 2004

GOLD: $393.10-393.60

per ounce Hong Kong, April 21, 2004

STOCK MARKET

PSE COMPOSITE INDEX



(See stock market report on Page B6)

Stocks extend gains

STOCKS extended recent gains yesterday but turnover slowed as investors took a cautious stance before general elections on May 10.

Expectations of good first-quarter corporate results also triggered further buying of key blue-chip companies.

Traders said early indications of fresh opinion polls showing President Macapagal-Arroyo grabbing a wider lead over her rivals would fuel more buying in coming sessions. The main index climbed 0.77 percent or 11.82 points to 1,537.78 points, its highest closing level since January.

The market has risen 6.61 percent so far this year.

"If the surveys show that GMA's lead is widening, the market would likely continue rallying," said Allan Araullo, vice president of Regina Capital Development Corp.

He said the main index may test resistance at 1,560 points even before the May 10 elections.

A decision on Monday by CalPERS, the largest US pension fund, to keep investing in the Philippines further boosted sentiment.

Turnover slipped to P429.95 million from Tuesday's P533.85 million. Gainers edged out losers 29 to 23, with 43 stocks unchanged.

Reuters

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- New Zealand Car of the Year (New Zealand)
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Once fun time

BREAKTIME

Conrado R. Banal III

IT is only right that, for the meantime, the bank which a certain Jose Velarde made famous, Equitable PCI Bank, should remain under the control of a single family.

It is only right, after all, because the Go family only owns less than one-third of the bank, while the government owns much more shares.

But that is all right in this country. Here, control of a publicly listed company like Equitable PCI cannot rest on ownership alone.

A good part of the deal has something to do with shrewdness. A little legal maneuver over the past years, for instance, has given the Go family control of the bank.

All this time, the Go family has been voting on some Equitable PCI shares which the bank itself paid for with its depositors' own money. And this is a public company?

* * *

THIS time around, anyway, the Go family remains in control because of another legal maneuver. It is called the "non-compete" proviso in corporate by-laws.

Simply put, the Equitable PCI by-laws ban other groups (i.e. outside the Go group) from sitting on its board, if they have interests in other banks.

That's what did in the group of Tessie Sy-Coson. Armed with proxies for the annual stockholders meeting the other day, the group tried to get into the bank's board.

Now, Tessie is the daughter of Tatang Henry Sy, the founder of the SM group. This is the Tatang who has more shopping malls than he has hair.

The SM group also owns Banco de Oro and China Bank. Thus, Tessie's group was treated by the Go family to that "non-compete" proviso. In short, it was a TKO.

* * *

IN reality, however, even minus the TKO, the group of Tessie did not have enough shares to get themselves into the board. They own only a few shares.

Even Tessie privately admitted—well, at least to friends—that it was not a well-planned attack. Hmm. Maybe her group just wanted to have some fun this time.

Scaring the juices out of the balding heads of some guys in Equitable PCI Bank may be fun, indeed, for Tessie and her group. Perhaps it's a way to even things up.

Earlier, just when Tessie clinched the deal to buy the shares of SSS in the bank, the Go family waged a media campaign, with the aid of a little political noise, to scuttle the deal.

And so Tessie and company did not have a single centavo invested in the bank, but they tried to get into the board, anyway. That must be a lot of fun!

* * *

ORIGINALLY, Tessie wanted to acquire the shares of SSS in Equitable PCI through her bank Banco de Oro.

She actually wanted to pay for the SSS shares in cash. Unfortunately for the SSS, such a cash payment is bad.

Now I don't know if the SSS' aversion to cash tells us something about the whole government, but I know that this cute administration of Gloriaetta needs cash badly.

It's just that, for the SSS, getting cash would mean it would have to absorb a loss from its Equitable PCI investment.

That is not allowed under its charter. Under its charter, the SSS cannot sell stocks at a loss. But as they say, no matter how stupid it is, the SSS charter is still the law.

* * *

WE are talking about an institution which manages an investment portfolio including stocks and bonds. As we all know, in stock investment, it is hit or miss.

When the market turns against them, the good fund investors simply cut their losses by unloading the losing investment and investing the proceeds elsewhere.

The SSS, while it is nothing but a similar fund manager, cannot do the same under the law of the land.

That's why the SSS and Tessie's group had to go through a complicated transaction with SSS to avoid selling at a loss. It did not involve cash payments.

And so luckily for Tessie, she has not yet paid a centavo for the SSS shares. This, given the legal maneuvering of the Go family, was good for her.

* * *

FOR the first time ever, the state-owned gambling monopoly, the Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corp., or Pagcor, borrowed money from banks. A lot of money!

This is the first time that you may have heard of a casino operator going bust, falling short of cash, needing to borrow money.

Based on what I learned from Mafia movies, casinos are better at making money than the Bangko Sentral, the minting shop itself.

But our very own Pagcor borrowed from Landbank, which is another state-owned company, and the PNB, which is another partly state-owned bank.

The loan was not much anyway. It only amounted to more than P1 billion. And Pagcor needed it to solve a little cash flow problem. And this is a cash factory?

* * *

WELL, according to the grapevine, Pagcor is on a losing streak. You know—bad luck! It has lost millions and millions on the gambling table. Hmm.

One story goes that a Taiwanese syndicate was able to cheat a Pagcor blackjack table somewhere in Parañaque.

The syndicate was able to cart away, based on the rumors, something like P50 million. It went back to Taiwan right away.

Now if that can happen on one blackjack table, and Pagcor has hundreds of them all over the country, can you imagine the losses?

Aside from the bad luck on the gambling table, Pagcor's image is going through some tough times. Thus it set aside a budget for PR and advertising of P430 million.

Look at that—hundreds of millions for advertising. Wow! Will somebody please explain to the public why Pagcor needs to advertise, when it is a monopoly!

* * *

FROM what I gathered, with the elections around the corner, Pagcor also had to set aside a lot of money for its worthy projects, such as giving 7,000 truncheons to barangay leaders, plus only 180 motorcycles and 50 pickup trucks.

Yet Pagcor could not afford to give a single centavo to one barangay association in Quezon City which is trying to send poor kids to school.

"Regrets" is the word which Pagcor gave to Joy Belmonte, daughter of Quezon City Mayor Sonny Belmonte, who heads the barangay association struggling to push its worthy cause.

Yet the board members of Pagcor gave themselves a cheap car plan of only P1 million each every year, rain or shine.

The car plan of the chairman is even better at P3 million, or three times that of the regular board member.

We are not even mentioning the fat bonuses and lavish perks to which the board members are entitled to, although not by law, but by board resolution of the same board members. Nice 'no?

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CONSTRUCTION TOOLS Bosch Angle Grinders, Drills, Jigsaws, Sanders, Circular Saws, Sockets, Rachets, Tampering Machines, Soil Compactors, Power Jacks, Concrete Mixers, Pliers, Long Nose, Cutters, Ducting Tapes, Etc.

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RESTAURANT AND KITCHEN EQUIPMENT

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OFFICE EQUIPMENT

Cabinets, Shelvings, Chairs, Mimeograph Machines, Lockers, HP Printers, Kodak Copier w/ Sorter

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ADB gives RP grant to boost capital mart

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE ASIAN Development Bank has given the Philippines a technical grant worth $250,000 to strengthen its securities trading markets.

In a statement, the ADB said the grant should boost investor confidence in the country as it would be used to enhance the ability of the Philippine Stock Exchange to regulate itself.

"The PSE has been unable to effectively self-regulate due to the dominance of broker-members who lack independence in compliance and surveillance," the bank said.

A committee comprising representatives from the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) and PSE is developing a new framework for self-regulation.

The TA from ADB will support the work of this committee.

"The TA builds upon earlier ADB assistance for the Philippines' capital markets and complements work being carried out to draw up strategies to develop the non-bank financial sector," says Debra Kertzman, an ADB securities market legal and regulatory specialist.

"Previous work supported the establishment of an effective legal and regulatory framework and the restructuring of the SEC. Governance and capacity-related issues at the exchange level will be addressed by the new grant," she added.

The ADB stressed the need for governance reforms in the capital markets. It noted that in 2000, the stock market was hit by a trading scandal that resulted in the mass resignation of the PSE's compliance and surveillance group.

Besides losing expertise and experience, the bank said investor confidence was severely affected.

PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of April 21, 2004)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
BANKS & FINANCIAL SERVICES					
BANKS					
Banco de Oro Univ. Bank	16.75	17	16.75	16.75	63,000
Bank of the Phil. Islands	45	47	45	47	1,023,000
Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	40	40	40	40	75,300
Export and Ind. Bank Inc.	0.54	0.54	0.52	0.53	570,000
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	24.25	25	24.25	25	705,500
Philippine National Bank	23	23	23	23	4,000
Phil. Savings Bank	26.5	26.5	26.5	26.5	19,000
Union Bank of the Phil.	24	24	24	24	200
FINANCIAL SERVICES					
First Metro Invest. Corp.	189	190	189	190	310
Manulife Financial Corp.	2085	2085	2085	2085	50
PCI Leasing & Fin. Inc.	1.34	1.34	1.34	1.34	20,000
Sun Life Financial Inc.	1500	1500	1500	1500	720
COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL					
COMMUNICATION					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	22	23	22	23	12,800
Digital Telecom Phils Inc.	0.65	0.66	0.65	0.66	30,000
Globe Telecom Inc.	880	895	880	895	14,150
Ipeople Inc.	1.14	1.14	1.14	1.14	8,000
Island Info and Tech Inc.	0.04	0.04	0.04	0.04	1,000,000
Pilipino Tel. Corp.	1.7	1.72	1.7	1.7	6,064,000
Transpacific Broadcast	1.36	1.38	1.36	1.38	80,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	1065	1065	1055	1060	115,650
Philweb Corp.	0.012	0.012	0.011	0.012	97,100,000
POWER & ENERGY					
Manila Electric Co. A	19	19.5	19	19.5	74,500
Manila Electric Co. B	29	29.5	28.5	29.5	733,400
Petron Corp.	3.1	3.15	3.05	3.15	2,316,000
Salcon Power Corp.	2	2	2	2	30,000
Trans-Asia Oil and Energy	0.95	0.98	0.95	0.98	40,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	2.95	3	2.9	3	144,000
CONSTRUCTION & OTHER RELATED PRODUCTS					
Engineering Equip. Inc.	0.28	0.28	0.28	0.28	10,000
Union Cement Corp.	1.66	1.68	1.66	1.68	818,000
FOOD, BEVERAGES & TOBACCO					
Ginebra San Miguel Inc.	28.5	28.5	28	28	43,000
Jollibee Foods Corp.	20	20.5	19.75	20.5	309,500
RFM Corp.	0.57	0.57	0.57	0.57	10,000
San Miguel Corp. A	58	58.5	58	58.5	261,000
San Miguel Corp. B	72.5	73	72.5	73	82,100
Universal Robina Corp.	6.5	6.5	6.5	6.5	8,000
Vitarich Corp.	0.26	0.26	0.26	0.26	400,000
HOLDING FIRMS					
Ayala Corp.	5.5	5.6	5.5	5.6	2,114,000
Aboitiz Equity Ventures	2.8	2.8	2.75	2.75	478,000
A. Soriano Corp.	0.98	0.98	0.98	0.98	60,000
APC Group Inc.	0.06	0.06	0.06	0.06	500,000
ATN Holdings Inc.	1.48	1.5	1.48	1.5	30,000
Benpres Holdings Corp.	0.54	0.56	0.54	0.55	9,830,000
Basic Consolidated Inc.	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	200,000
Crown Equities Inc.	0.125	0.125	0.125	0.125	100,000
DMCI Holdings Inc.	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	1,490,000
Ever-Gotesco Resources	0.022	0.022	0.022	0.022	500,000
First Phil Hldgs Corp.	24	24.25	23.75	24	646,900
Global Equities Inc.	0.06	0.06	0.06	0.06	400,000
Ionics Inc.	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.2	10,000
J.G. Summit Holdings Inc.	1.78	1.78	1.78	1.78	590,000
Macroasia Corp.	0.46	0.46	0.46	0.46	120,000
Megaworld Corp.	1.14	1.16	1.14	1.16	1,251,000
Metro Pacific Corp.	0.26	0.27	0.25	0.27	3,100,000
Prime Orion Phils. Inc.	0.155	0.16	0.155	0.155	10,360,000
Roxas Holdings Inc.	0.86	0.86	0.86	0.86	180,000
Solid Group, Inc.	0.34	0.34	0.34	0.34	60,000
South China Resources Inc	0.21	0.21	0.21	0.21	10,000
SPI Technologies Inc.	15	15	15	15	23,700
Uniwide Holdings Inc.	0.08	0.08	0.08	0.08	100,000
Wellex Industries, Inc.	0.31	0.31	0.31	0.31	7,000,000
Waterfront Phils. Inc.	0.215	0.215	0.21	0.21	100,000
MANUFACTURING, DISTRIBUTION & TRADING					
Mabuhay Vinyl Corp.	1.04	1.04	1.02	1.02	15,000
Picop Resources Inc.	0.06	0.06	0.06	0.06	400,000
Pryce Corp.	0.26	0.26	0.26	0.26	300,000
HOTEL, RECREATION & OTHER SERVICES					
Belle Corp.	0.5	0.51	0.5	0.51	240,000
Premiere Ent. Prod. Inc.	0.24	0.24	0.24	0.24	50,000
BONDS, PREFERRED & WARRANTS					
ABS-CBN Hldgs. Corp (Pdr)	22.75	23.5	22.75	23.5	1,097,100
PLDT (10% Pref) Series L	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	100
PLDT (10% Pref) Series M	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	100
PLDT (10% Pref) Series S	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	100
PLDT (10% Pref) Series T	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	3,000
PLDT (10% Pref.) Series U	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	1,700
PLDT (10% Pref) Series V	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	300
PLDT (10% Pref) Series W	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	7,200
PLDT (10% Pref) Series Y	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	1,400
PLDT 10% Pref Series Aa	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	2,100
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	5.7	5.7	5.6	5.7	9,533,000
Cyber Bay Corp.	0.115	0.12	0.115	0.12	300,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.205	0.205	0.205	0.205	1,400,000
Filinvest Land Inc.	1.02	1.04	1.02	1.04	995,000
Highlands Prime, Inc.	2.1	2.1	2.1	2.1	100,000
Fil-Estate Land Inc.	0.21	0.21	0.21	0.21	200,000
MRC Allied Ind. Inc.	0.08	0.08	0.08	0.08	300,000
Philippine Estates Corp.	0.0925	0.095	0.0925	0.095	25,900,000
Robinsons Land Corp.	1.8	1.8	1.78	1.78	307,000
SM Development Corp.	1.12,	1.12	1.12	1.12	5,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	5.9	6	5.8	6	4,040,000
MINING					
Atlas Cons. Min & Dev't	1.04	1.04	1.04	1.04	2,000
Dizon Copper Silver Mines	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1	5,000
Lepanto Cons Mng. Co. A	0.21	0.21	0.21	0.21	20,000
Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co B	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	130,000
Manila Mining Corp. A	0.0055	0.0055	0.0055	0.0055	3,000,000
Philex Mining Corp. A	0.35	0.35	0.35	0.35	390,000
Philex Mining Corp. B	0.37	0.37	0.37	0.37	110,000
OIL					
Oriental Pet. & Min. B	0.003	0.003	0.0028	0.0028	6,000,000

DISCLOSURES

EURO-MED Laboratories Philippines Inc. will hold its annual stockholders' meeting on May 19, 10 a.m. at the Quezon Hall of Philippine Columbian Association, Paco, Manila. Stockholders of record as of April 26 will be entitled to notice of and to vote at the meeting.

* * *

PRUDENTIAL Bank will hold its annual stockholders' meeting on May 19, 4 p.m. at the 3/F Boardroom of Prudential Bank Building, Makati City. Only stockholders of record as of April 20 are entitled to notice of and to vote at the meeting. Subject to the approval of shareholders, the declared stock dividend of 20.978 percent to replace the redeemed preferred shares would come from the bank's unissued common shares.

* * *

ATR Kim Eng Financial Corp. will hold its annual stockholders' meeting on May 28, 3 p.m. at the Nash Room of Mandarin Oriental Manila, Makati City. Only stockholders of record as of April 21 are entitled to vote at the meeting.

* * *

ELECTED directors of **San Miguel Corp.** were Eduardo Cojuangco Jr., Ramon Ang, Estelito Mendoza, Manuel Cojuangco, Inigo Zobel, Corazon dela Paz, Winston Garcia, Leo Alvez, Pacifico Fajardo, Menardo Jimenez, Shigeki Ota, Hitoshi Oshima, Henry Sy Jr., Octavio Victor Espiritu and Egmidio de Silva Jose. Ota later resigned and was replaced by Yoshinori Isozaki.

* * *

SINOPHIL Corp.'s annual stockholders' meeting will be on June 3 with record date on May 3.

Compiled by Maricar D. Tolosa, PDI Research

CURRENCIES

April 21, 2004 Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Dollar Equivalent	Peso Equivalent
United States	Dollar	0.843739	1.000000	55.6310
Japan	Yen	0.007758	0.009195	0.5115
United Kingdom	Pound	1.507341	1.786500	99.3848
Hong Kong	Dollar	0.108201	0.128240	7.1341
Switzerland	Franc	0.642311	0.761267	42.3500
Canada	Dollar	0.621860	0.737028	41.0016
Singapore	Dollar	0.501628	0.594530	33.0743
Australia	Dollar	0.622181	0.737409	41.0228
Bahrain	Dinar*	2.238095	2.652590	147.5662
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.224997	0.266667	14.8350
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UAE	Dirham	0.229720	0.272264	15.1463
Euro	Euro	1.000000	1.185200	65.9339
Argentina	Peso	0.297616	0.352734	19.6229
Brazil	Real	0.289051	0.342583	19.0582
Denmark	Kroner	0.134383	0.159271	8.8604
India	Rupee	0.019233	0.022795	1.2681
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.222066	0.263193	14.6417
Mexico	New Peso	0.074420	0.088203	4.9068
New Zealand	Dollar	0.534520	0.633513	35.2430
Norway	Kroner	0.120731	0.143090	7.9602
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South Africa	Rand	0.130006	0.154083	8.5718
Korea	Won	0.000732	0.000867	0.0482
Sweden	Kroner	0.109017	0.129207	7.1879
Syria	Pound	0.016320	0.019342	1.0760
Taiwan	Nt Dollar	0.025700	0.030460	1.6945
Venezuela	Bolivar	0.000440	0.000522	0.0290

PLDT extends Piltel debt-swap deadline

By Clarissa S. Batino

PHILIPPINE Long Distance Telephone Co. yesterday extended the deadline for Smart Communications Inc. to buy the debts of Pilipino Telephone Corp. to April 30 after failing to generate sufficient creditor interest on time.

PLDT said in a disclosure to the Philippine Stock Exchange that as of the evening of April 20, the original deadline, Smart had not received offers from creditors that would meet its self-imposed threshold.

Piltel creditors Bank of the Philippine Islands, Metropolitan Bank and Trust Co. and Land Bank of the Philippines had asked PLDT to extend the debt-swap offer by two weeks.

"Smart indicated that it would only proceed with the debt transaction if creditors representing at least 75 percent in aggregate of existing Piltel debt by value participated in the offer to sell their indebtedness to Smart in exchange for one or more of the menu of options," the PLDT disclosure noted.

Last March 23, Smart gave Piltel creditors until April 20 to respond to its offer to absorb P20.5 billion worth of obligations of its losing affiliate through a cash settlement at a discount, conversion into Smart's medium-term dollar loans at a discount, conversion into a 10-year debt of Smart, or a swap with sovereign-guaranteed dollar bonds held by Smart.

"Some creditors have informed Smart of their intention to participate in the offer, but due to Easter and other holidays, these creditors have not been able to complete their formal approvals by the original deadline of April 20," PLDT noted.

A successful debt conversion would allow Smart to acquire PLDT's 45-percent stake in Piltel. Smart wanted to conclude the debt swap by May 5.

Creditors of Piltel, according to a source, sought more time to study the proposal of Smart as it would involve losses for most banks.

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300,000 - 499,999	5.50	5.75	5.75	6.00	7.00
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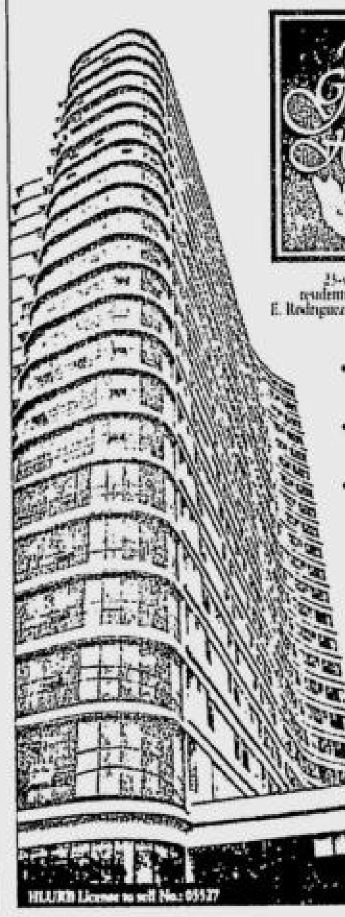
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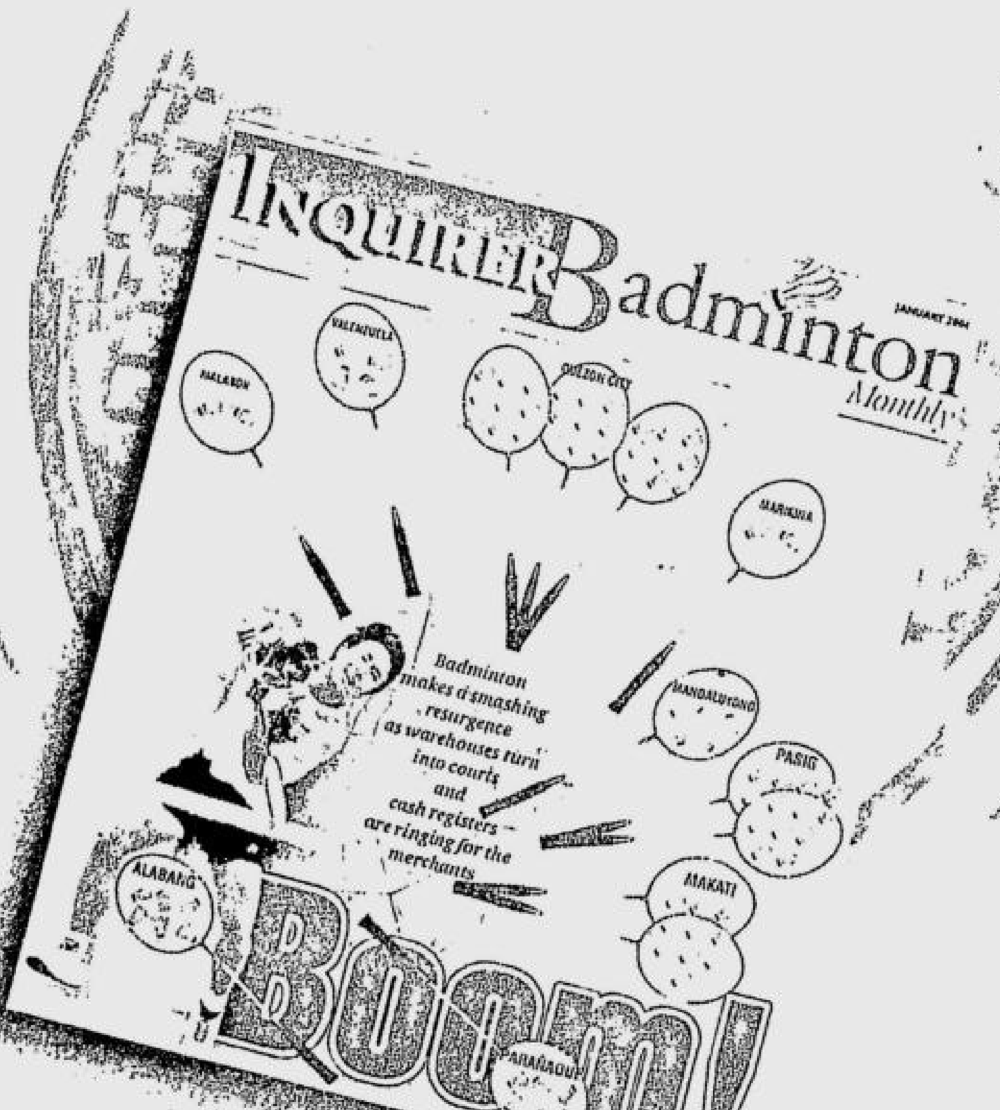
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12 HOUSE OF THE DEAD

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10 CHECK INN

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4 PAYCHECK 10 20, 12 40, 3 00, 5.20, 7,40, 10 00
5 HELLBOY 11.30, 2.10, 4 50, 7.30, 10.10
6 TAKING LIVES 10.35, 12 50, 3 05, 5.20, 7 35, 9.50
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8 PETER PAN 12.30, 2 50, 5.10, 7.30, 9.45
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3 TAKING LIVES 10 35, 12 50, 3.05, 5.20, 7 35, 9 50
4 SPARTAN 10.10, 12 25, 2.40, 4 55, 7 10, 9 40
5 PETER PAN 10.15, 12 30, 2 50, 5 10, 7 30, 9.50
6 MASIKIP SA DIBDIB 10 10, 12.25, 2 50, 2.40, 4 55, 7.10, 9.40
7 THE PASSION OF THE CHRIST 11.50, 2.30, 5 10, 7.45, 10.0v

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1 SPARTAN 11:1u, 1.40, 4:10, 6.40, 9 10
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3 TAKING LIVES 11 00, 1 00, 3 00, 5 00, 7 00, 9 20
4 PETER PAN 10 05, 12 05, 2 15, 4 25, 6 40, 9 00
5 HELLBOY 10 55, 1 25, 3 55, 6 25, 9 00
6 CHECK-IN 11 00, 1 00, 3 00, 5 00, 7 00, 9 00
7 PAYCHECK 10 25, 1 05, 2 45, 6.25, 9 05
8 MASIKIP SA DIBDIB 11 40, 2.15, 4 50, 7.25, 10 00

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4 TAKING LIVES 12 00, 2 00, 4 00, 6 00, 8 10
5 THE PASSION OF THE CHRIST 12.20, 3 00, 5 40, 8 30
6 PAYCHECK 11 45, 1 55, 4 05, 6 15, 8 30
7 PETER PAN 11 20, 1 35, 3 50, 6 05, 8 30
8 THE UNINVITED 11 00, 1 20, 3 40, 6 00, 8 30

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2 HELLBOY
3 MASIKIP SA DIBDIB
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CINEMA-5 (DTS)	SCOOBY DOO 2
CINEMA-6	NIGHTMARE
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CINEMA-9 (DTS)	HELLBOY
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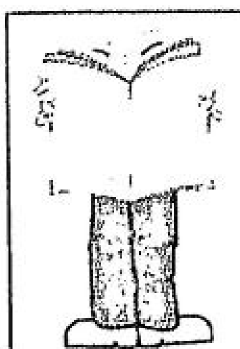

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5	RESERVE
6	
7 (DTS)	
8 (SDDS)	
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1	CHECK INN
2	PETER PAN
3	BOOBITA ROSE
4 (SDDS)	HELLBOY
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8	HOUSE OF THE DEAD
9	PASSION OF THE CHRIST

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2 (SDDS)	
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5	

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1	PASSION OF THE CHRIST
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2	SPARTAN
3	CHECK INN
4	RESERVE

Isetann Cinerama Complex Recto SUPER CINERAMA
tel 733.4238

1 (DOLBY)	SPARTAN
2	THE CURSE
3	CHECK - INN
4	BOOBITA ROSE
5	HELLBOY

Berma Cinema
(Baclaran) tel 879.2030 / 879.2029

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2	CHECK INN

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3 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	HELLBOY
4 (SDDS)	SPARTAN
5 (DTS)	PAY CHECK
6	TWISTED
7	BOOBITA ROSE

Jade Cinema
(Angeles City) tel (045) 887.5001 to 03

1 (DOLBY EX)	HELLBOY
2	BOOBITA ROSE
3 (DTS EX)	TAKING LIVES
4	GRUDGE 2

Cine Nepo
(Angeles City) tel (045) 887.0121

1	BOOBITA ROSE
2	PAYCHECK
3 (DOLBY)	HELLBOY
4	TAKING LIVES

Cine Nepo
(Dagupan City) tel (075) 515.8489

1	BOOBITA ROSE
2	WISE GIRL
3 (DOLBY)	HIDALGO
4	UNINVITED

CINEMA 2000

Cinema 2000 Target Mall
(Sta. Rosa, Laguna) tel (049) 837.0926

1	BOOBITA ROSE
2	PAYCHECK
3 (DTS)	HELLBOY

Cinema 2000 Waltermart
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7383

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2 (DTS)	HOUSE OF THE DEAD
3 (DOLBY)	HELLBOY
4	PAYCHECK

Cinema 2000 Pavilion Mall
(Biñan) tel (049) 411.1146

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3 (DTS)	PAYCHECK
4	HOUSE OF THE DEAD

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2	BOOBITA ROSE
3 (DOLBY)	HIDALGO

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1 (SDDS)	UNINVITED
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Lianas MovieCity
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3 (DTS)	PAY CHECK
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Olivarez Tri-Cinema
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2	ACACIA

Olivarez Los Baños
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1	HELLBOY
2	ACACIA
3	PAY CHECK

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4 (DOLBY)	50 FIRST DATES

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(Laguna City) tel 520.8914

1 (DTS)	RESERVE

Fiesta World Mall
(Lipa) tel (043) 981.0790

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2	HOUSE OF THE DEAD
3	PAYCHECK
4	PETER PAN

Emperor
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2	VENUS

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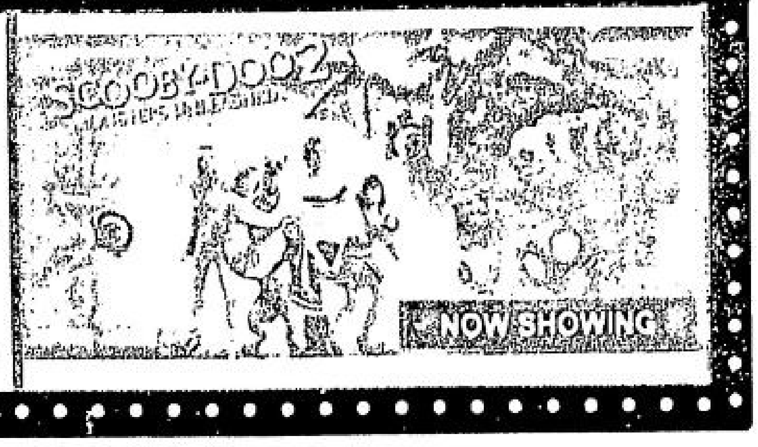

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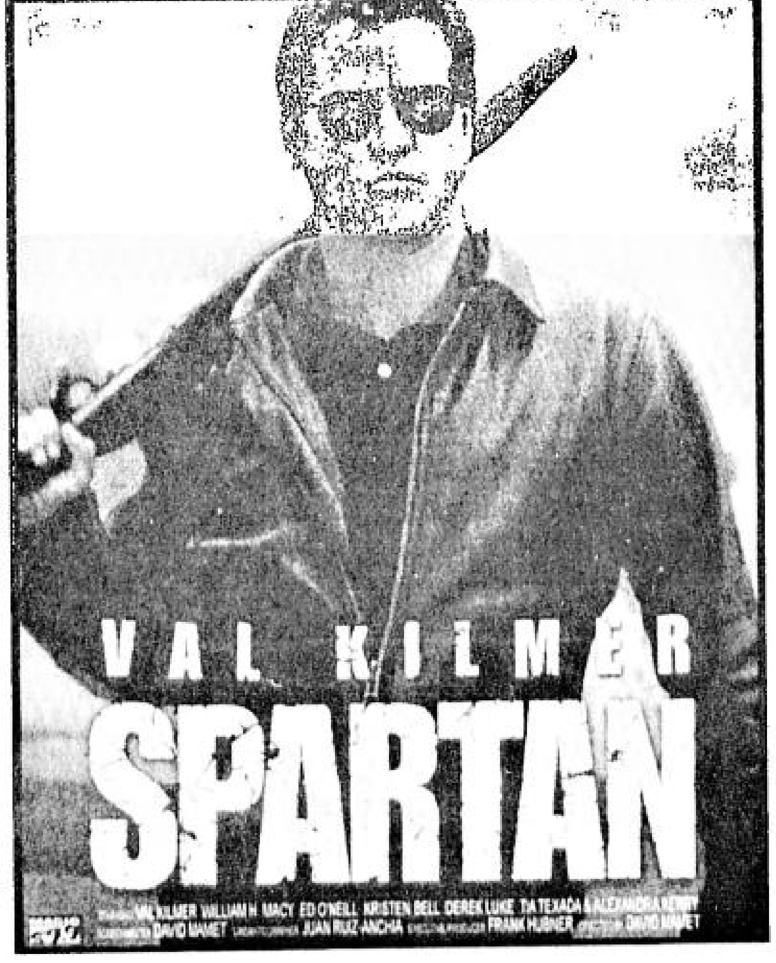
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LOT A	Vacant/Parking Lot with an area of 2,798 square meters located at Sen. Gil Puyat Ave. corner Tindalo St., Makati City	P 328,765,000
LOT B	Vacant/Parking Lot with an area of 437 square meters located at Amorsolo corner dela Rosa Sts., Makati City	29,497,500

Sealed bids will be received on Tuesday, May 25, 2004 from 2:00 to 3:00 p.m. and immediately thereafter, the bids shall be opened and tabulated in the presence of the bidders at the PMO Conference Room, 6th floor, Privatization and Management Office, 104 Gamboa St., Legaspi Village, Makati City.

Interested parties are advised to deal directly with the PMO Marketing Department. Authenticated bidding documents together with the Asset Specific Catalogue, may be secured from PMO for a nominal fee of P2,500.00.

In the event that the public bidding becomes a failure, the PMO reserves the right to accept proposals for the subject assets.

For inquiries, please contact Mr. Matthew R. de Guzman at telephone numbers 817-8762 or 818-4733.

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— Psalm 21:15

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of Pateros, Metro Manila

Peacefully joined our Creator
on April 17, 2004 at the age of 75.

His bereaved wife **Jessilyn**; children **Dennis** and **Faith**; brothers, sisters and in-laws **Normy** and **Ester**, **Carmelo** and **Fe**, **Belly** and **Gemin** (†), **Oscar** (†) and **Anita**, **Bing** and **Ely**, **Mel** and **Rezy**, **Ading** and **Tessie** (†), **Ida** and **Eddie**, **Bill** and **Gloria**, **Dick** and **Chuchie**, **Mendy** and **Ganda**; nephews, nieces, all relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His body lies in state at Chapel 7, Garden of Memories Memorial Chapels, Bagong Calzada, Pateros, Metro Manila.

Necrological services will be on Saturday, April 24, 2004 at 7:00 p.m.

Interment will be on Sunday, April 25, 2004 at Garden of Memories Memorial Park after the 10:00 a.m. Mass.

So Dearly Love...
So Fondly Remembered...
So Truly Missed...

In Loving Memory on the First Death Anniversary of

ROBERTO R. REVERENTE

April 23, 2004

Masses will be offered at the following churches:

Our Lady of Beautiful Love Parish Merville Park, Parañaque City	6:00 p.m.
Santuario de San Antonio Parish Forbes Park, Makati City	7:30 a.m.
St. Alphonsus Mary de Liguori Parish Magallanes Village, Makati City	12:15 noon
St. James the Great Parish Ayala Alabang Village, Muntinlupa City	
St. Gregory Cathedral Albay	6:30 a.m.
St. John the Baptist Parish Camalig, Albay	5:00 p.m.
St. John the Baptist Parish Tabaco, Albay	5:30 a.m.
Our Lady of the Gate Parish Daraga, Albay	6:30 a.m.
Redemptorist Church Legaspi City	6:30 a.m.
St. Michael Parish Oas, Albay	
San Pascual Baylon Parish Obando, Bulacan	6:00 a.m.

His loving wife **NENE**, son **BENJIE**, daughter-in-law **JENNY**, brothers & sisters, in-laws, request you to remember him in your prayers.

An obituary with a picture can be a fitting tribute to your departed loved one.

INQUIRER OBITUARIES

DEATH ANNOUNCEMENT • MESSAGE OF THANKS
DEATH ANNIVERSARY • REQUIEMS • FREE OBIT DESIGN

For the needs of your departed Loved Ones, the following establishments can help you.

ARLINGTON MEMORIAL CHAPEL
12 G. Araneta Avenue, Quezon City;
Tels. 715-1025; 715-1031; 715-1027
ARLINGTON EAST THE GARDEN CHAPELS
C. Raymundo St. cor. Mercedes Ave., San Miguel Ave., Pasig City
Tels. 747-8599; 747-8609 • Telefax 641-1760
AUREA QUIOGUE FUNERAL HOMES
243 A.B. Fernandez Ave., Dagupan City, Pangasinan
Tels. (0785) 522-3451; 522-2128; (0917) 434-9976
CAPITOL MEMORIAL CHAPELS INC.
1305 G. Araneta Ave., Quezon City
Tel. 732-0309; 732-1095
CEBU ROLLING HILLS MEMORIAL CHAPELS INC.
Cebu Branch: A.S. Fortuna Street, Banilad, Mandaue City, Cebu;
Tels. 346-2543; 346-2601
COSMOPOLITAN FUNERAL HOMES, INC.
Nivel Hills, Lahug, Cebu City; Tels. 231-0721; 231-3192
COSMOPOLITAN FUNERAL HOMES, INC.
Camus Ext. cor. J. Abad Santos, Davao City;
Tels. (082) 227-1201; 227-1258
DAYAO FUNERAL HOME
#2 Bayani St., Galas, Quezon City;
Tels. 740-2683; 781-3705; 781-3688; 413-9400; 715-5594
DALLUAY MEMORIAL SERVICES
#42 Upper Kalaklan, Olongapo City
Tels. (047) 222-3605; (047) 811-1086; (047) 222-4512; (047) 224-2014
DON BOSCO CHAPELS
Pasay Road, Makati City; Tel. 894-5932 to 34
DULCE MEMORIAL SERVICES
Jose Abad Santos Ave. cor. Dinalupihan St., Manuguit, Manila
Tels. 712-5102; 741-5125; 741-5133; Fax No. 711-3064
DYNASTY MEMORIAL CHAPELS
965 Del Monte Ave., Frisco, Quezon City;
Tels. 416-3231; 4162373
ERIC SANTIAGO MEMORIAL CHAPELS
26 Bayanbayan Ave., Concepcion I, Marikina City;
Tels. 942-6044; 475-1177
FLORESCO FUNERAL HOME
219 Gen. Luna St., Concepcion, Malabon, Metro Manila;
Tels. 2812963; 2813034; 2810522
FUNERARIA PANGILINAN
Santo Entierro cor. P. Burgos St., Lourdes Sur, Angeles City
Tels. (045) 888-2959 ; (045) 322-5247
FUNERARIA ANGEL QUIOGUE
No. 67 Pasig Boulevard Extension, Pasig City;
Tels. 641-7909; 641-1735
M. Almeda St., Pateros, Metro Manila;
Tels. 642-3010; 633-3602
FUNERARIA FILIPINAS
187 Real St., Zapote Alabang, Las Piñas;
Tels. 873-0507; 873-0024
FUNERARIA FILIPINAS
865 J.P. Rizal St., Poblacion, Makati City;
Tels. 890-3556; 899-8191
FUNERARIA TUASON
Poblacion, San Miguel, Bulacan 3011;
Tels. (044) 764-0281; 678-0266; (0917) 895-0603
FUNERARIA SAMSON
145 Bayan Luma, Imus, Cavite;
Tels. (046) 471-3375; 471-2675
GARDEN OF MEMORIES MEMORIAL PARK
Calsadang Bago, Pateros, Metro Manila;
Tels. 642-6181 to 82
HERITAGE PARK
Bayani Road, Fort Bonifacio, Taguig, Metro Manila
Tels. (DL) 845-2341 to 42; (TL) 845-2334 to 38 loc. 110/112
HOLY GARDENS MEMORIAL PARK
Third Level, Unishoppe Complex, Quezon Ave., Angono, Rizal
Tels. 651-1711; 651-0737
HOLY TRINITY MEMORIAL CHAPELS
Dr. A. Santos Ave., Sucat Rd., Sucat, Parañaque City;
Tels. 825-1296; 825-1291, Telefax: 825-1314
LA FUNERARIA LAWRENCE BAQUIRAN
#27 Crisologo St., Vigan, Ilocos Sur;
Tel. 722-2730; Cell (0917) 5680138; (0917) 5680145
Manila #23 Pato St., Project 2, Quezon City; Tel. 434-3258
LA FUNERARIA PAZ, INC.
1501 C.M. Recto Ave. cor. T. Mapua, Manila;
Tels. 711-6931 to 35; 732-4795; 732-2827
LA FUNERARIA PAZ, INC.
143 G. Araneta Ave. cor. Kaliraya St., Quezon City
Tels. 749-3806 to 11; 712-3001; 743-6502 or 05

LA FUNERARIA PAZ, SUCAT, INC.
Dr. A. Santos Ave., Sucat, Parañaque;
Tels. 820-1592; 825-9947; 825-8635
LA FUNERARIA PAZ, INC.
79 Naguilian Rd., Baguio City; Tel. (074) 443-3337; (074) 442-3117
LA FUNERARIA SAPINOSO
G. Tirona St., Imus, Cavite;
Tels. (046) 471-3386; (046) 471-4417; (046) 571-1978
LINCOLN MEMORIAL SERVICES, INC.
Ground Floor, JEMP Bldg., J. Cabarrus cor. Monserrat Sts., Phase I,
BF Commercial Center, Parañaque, Metro Manila
LOYOLA MEMORIAL CHAPELS
EDSA cor. Bernardino St., Guadalupe, Makati City;
Tels. 895-1011 to 19
LOYOLA MEMORIAL PARK CHAPELS & CREMATORY SERVICES
Loyola Memorial Park, A. Bonifacio Avenue, Tañong, Marikina City
Tels. 941-3196 to 98; 941-3676; Telefax 941-3577
MALABED FUNERAL SERVICE
3-A Coronado St., Guadalupe Viejo, Makati City
Tel. 890-63-18
MARIAN MEMORIAL CHAPELS
Marcos Hiway, Antipolo, Rizal; Tels. 645-1855
MARCELO FUNERAL HOMES
Tels. 283-1613; 273-8922
MT. SINAI MEMORIAL CHAPEL
Arellano St., Dagupan City;
Tels. (075) 515-5960; 522-8783; (0917) 520-5001
NACIONAL MEMORIAL HOMES
264 G. Araneta Avenue, Quezon City;
Tels. 713-5231 to 35; 714-0867; 714-0868
OLONGAPO MEMORIAL PARK
Del Rosario St., Tabacuhan, Sta. Rita, Olongapo
Tel. No. (047) 223-1692
OUR LADY OF PEACE MEMORIAL PARK CHAPEL & SERVICES, INC.
No. 6 Carigma St., Antipolo City 1870
Tel. No. 697-0782; 697-0026; 650-7426; Fax : 697-2764
PAKET SANTIAGO MEMORIAL HOMES
13 V. Gomez St., San Roque, Marikina City;
Tels. 646-1725; 646-1730
POPULAR MEMORIAL CHAPELS, INC.
2141 Rizal Ave., Sta. Cruz, Manila;
Tel. Nos. 254-0867, 254-0839
PRIME MEMORIAL CHAPELS
200 Commonwealth Ave., Quezon City;
Tels. 427-8412; 4278403
ROLLING HILLS MEMORIAL CHAPELS INC.
Ground Flr. Rolling Hills Chapel, 27th-Lacson St.,
Mandalagan, Bacolod City; Tel. 433-7132
RIZAL FUNERAL HOMES
438 Cementina St., Pasay City;
Tels. 831-1204
Sucat Branch: 8187 Dr. A. Santos Ave.,
Sucat, Parañaque City
Tels. 826-1376; 826-9682; (0915) 712-1220
SANTUARIO DE SAN ANTONIO PARISH
Forbes Park, Makati City;
Tel. Nos. 843-8838/30; Fax No. 843-9223
SANTUARIO DE SAN JOSE PARISH
East Greenhills, Mandaluyong City;
Telefax 724-4139; 725-2044
ST. ALPHONSUS MARY DE LIGOURI PARISH
Magallanes Village, Makati City;
Tels. 852-8228; 852-7284
ST. MARK MEMORIAL CHAPEL
16-15 G. Tuazon cor. Loreto St., Sampaloc, Manila;
Tels. 749-3679; 781-1772
ST. PETER FUNERAL HOMES
296 Quezon Ave., Quezon City;
Tels. 372-5084; 410-9286/87
UNIVERSAL FUNERAL SERVICE & MEMORIAL CHAPELS
2028 Rizal Ave., Sta. Cruz, Manila;
Tels. 493-4458; 493-4540
VERONICA MEMORIAL HOMES
Official NBI Morgue 517-A Arnaiz St., Pasay City;
Tels. 831-3797; 844-7846; 843-1801; 845-4836
WELINGTON FUNERAL SERVICES
1511 Gen. Luna St., Paco, Manila; Tel. 302-5447
ZUASOLA FUNERAL HOMES
Brgy. Del Remedio, San Pablo City, Laguna
Tels. (049) 562-1668; 800-2914 Cel. No. (0917) 5016963

OBITUARY REQUIREMENTS: ❶ Copy of Death Certificate ❷ Any Identification document (I.D.)

WE ACCEPT CREDIT CARDS and bank-to-bank payments

We accept Classified advertisements
Lines, Recruitment, Obituaries, Bidding

in **Luzon**

Bakit lalayo ka pa? Sa INQUIRER, *convenient na sulit pa!*

[illegible]

NATIONAL CLASSIFIEDS

The PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER enjoys the biggest circulation and readership among all the major broadsheets in the country. It has a dominant market share of over 55% according to the 2000 Asia Research Organization (ARO) Tri-Media Study

We accept Classified advertisements
Lines, Recruitment, Obituaries, Bidding

in **Mindanao**

Ake ya tu na INQUIRER. *Sirea ya, sulit pa!*

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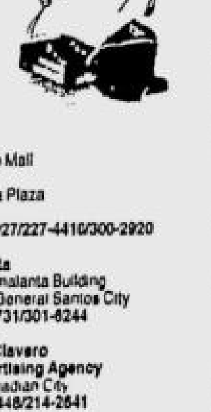
Mr. Rolando Busa
R.C. Busa Trading
490 G. Flores Avenue
Butuan City
Tel Nos (085)225-3247
(085) 225-3100/341-5082
Cagayan de Oro City
OMNI General Merchandise
Dr. 1 De Leon Building
Pabayo-Pacana Streets
Cagayan de Oro City
Tel Nos (08822) 722-530
(088) 856-5253
Grandstar News & Magazines
122 Cruz Taal corner Pabayo Street
Cagayan de Oro City
Tel Nos (088) 857-2571/857-1612
Telefax No (088) 231-3248
E-mail grandstar@hotmail.com
Cotabato
Marquez News & Magazine Agency
Marquez Building, 51 Sinsuat Avenue
Cotabato City
Tel Nos (064) 421-3264/421-8611/
(064) 229-7069 (Lotlot - Secretary)
Davao City
Dabaw Periodicals, Inc.
Santos Building Gov. Duterte Street
Davao City (fronting Galleria Hotel)
Tel Nos (082) 226-4406/221-3379/
221-3424/226-2931

Babasahin ATBP.
Lower Level, Gaisano Mall
Bajada, Davao City
Ground Floor, Victoria Plaza
Bajada, Davao City
Tel Nos (082) 221-3927/227-4410/300-2920
General Santos
Mr. Ramon Dimalanta
GSC Newscenter Dimalanta Building
35 Pioneer Avenue, General Santos City
Tel Nos (083) 301-8731/301-6244
Pagadian City
Mr. Eduardo Villar Clavero
Edmar News - Advertising Agency
Bonifacio Street, Pagadian City
Tel Nos (062) 215-1448/214-2641
Cell No (0919) 660-0001
Zamboanga
Mr. James Hao
Marlen's Variety Store
86 88 Sevilla Street Zamboanga City
Tel Nos (062) 991-4294/991-0973
Mr. Ruben Bautista
c/o Norie Bautista
Christian Vincent Newsstand
P. Brillantes Street corner Campaner Street
Zamboanga City
Tel Nos (062) 991-2966/990-4016

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
NATIONAL CLASSIFIEDS

The PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER enjoys the biggest circulation and readership among all the major broadsheets in the country. It has a dominant market share of over 55% according to the 2000 Asia Research Organization (ARO) Tri-Media Study



SEATTLE DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY GROUP CORP.

NOTICE TO ALL CONCERNED

ATTENTION: ALL SUPPLIERS, SERVICE PROVIDERS, OWNERS OF MEMBERSHIP SHARES, AND OTHER CREDITORS OF:

- Sacobia Hills Development Corporation (SHDC)
- True North Golf and Country Club (True North)
- Sacobia Homes, Inc. (SHI)

ALL OF CLARK SPECIAL ECONOMIC ZONES, CLARK FIELD, ANGELES CITY.

ANNOUNCEMENT

The new LESSEE, SEATTLE DEVELOPMENT GROUP CORPORATION (SDGC), of the real property formerly leased by CLARK DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION (CDC) to SHDC, True North, and SHI, wishes to inform and hereby guarantee that the SDGC is committed to honor, respect, and settle all the liabilities/ obligations of the former lessees/ assignors That are duly disclosed to the SDGC thru the LEGAL DEPARTMENT of CDC.

Wherefore, in the proper exercise of due diligence and in consonance with the provision in the Amendment to the Lease Agreement duly approved by the CDC, NOTICE is hereby given to all or every individual suppliers, service providers, golf club membership holders, and other creditors of SHDC, True North, and SHI to present proof and/or documents/ papers to the LEGAL DEPARTMENT of CDC for the required VALIDATION and/or settlement of the liabilities/ obligations incurred by the former lessees/ assignors.

Much as the new lessees (SDGC) wishes to honor, respect, and settle all such liabilities/ obligations, only those that have gone through proper validation process shall be honored, respected, and settled.

All concerned parties are advised to present within forty-five (45) days from this NOTICE the required validation papers to:

THE LEGAL DEPARTMENT
Clark Development Corporation
Clark Special Economic Zone
Clarkfield, Angeles City Pampanga

Failure on the part of those concerned to act on this NOTICE within said period will constrain SDGC to disregard any future claim thereto.

(PDI – April 22, 2004)

TransCo
National Transmission Corporation

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID
AD NO. MMD TRANSCO 2004-020

PD Ref. No.: PB040309-EL0038

1. The **NATIONAL TRANSMISSION CORPORATION, BIDS AND AWARDS COMMITTEE (TRANSCO-BAC) – HEAD OFFICE**, invites local bidders/ contractors to apply for eligibility who are:
   a. Duly licensed Filipino citizens/sole proprietorships; or
   b. Partnerships duly organized under the laws of the Philippines and of which at least sixty percent (60%) of the interest belongs to citizens of the Philippines; or
   c. Corporations duly organized under the laws of the Philippines, and of which at least sixty percent (60%) of the outstanding capital stock belongs to citizens of the Philippines; or
   d. Manufacturers, suppliers and/or distributors forming themselves into a joint venture, i.e., group of two (2) or more manufacturers, suppliers and/or distributors that intend to be jointly and severally responsible or liable for a particular contract: Provided, however, that Filipino ownership or interest of the joint venture concerned shall be at least sixty percent (60%); or
   e. Cooperatives duly registered with the Cooperatives Development Authority (CDA).
2. Procurement of:

   Schedule I **SUPPLY, DELIVERY & INSTALLATION OF THREE (3) UNITS STAINLESS FUEL TANK (1 LOT)**

   The Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) to be Bid is P589,428.50 to be sourced from the Internal Cash Generation of TransCo.

   Schedule II **SUPPLY, DELIVERY & INSTALLATION OF ONE (1) UNITS STAINLESS WATER TANK (1 LOT)**

   The Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) to be Bid is P300,000.00 to be sourced from the Internal Cash Generation of TransCo.
3. The contract to be performed by the successful bidder shall be specified in the Technical Quotation Form of the Bid Documents that will be issued.
4. The Bid Documents will be available for issuance starting *April 21, 2004 to May 20, 2004* at the BAC Secretariat Office, National Transmission Corporation, Materials Management Division (MMD), Ground Floor, TransCo Main Bldg., Power Center, Quezon Avenue corner BIR Road, Diliman, Quezon City upon payment of non-refundable fee of Five Hundred Pesos (P500.00) per set.
5. Pre-Bid Conference will be held on *May 6, 2004* at *3:00 p.m.* at the Admin Conference Room, Ground Floor Transco Main Bldg., Power Center, Quezon Avenue corner BIR Road, Diliman, Quezon City.
6. Deadline for submission, receipt and opening of bids shall be on or before *10:00 a.m.* of *May 21, 2004* at the Admin Conference Room, Ground Floor, TransCo Main Bldg., Power Center, Quezon Ave. corner BIR Road, Diliman, Quezon City. If the date falls on a non-working day or declared non-working day, the deadline for submission shall be moved to the next working day immediately following said date. Late submission and/or incomplete application shall not be accepted.
7. All particulars relative to the eligibility, bidding, evaluation of bids and award of contract shall be governed by the Implementing Rules and Regulations-A of Republic Act 9184.
8. TransCo reserves the right to reject any Application for Eligibility or all bids without offering any reasons, waive any required formality therein, and to make an award to the bidder whose proposal is most advantageous to the Corporation.
9. Additional information shall be furnished upon request. All communications should be addressed to the undersigned at the aforementioned address.

(Sgd.) **ANTONIO G. LABAYANI**
Chairman, Bids and Award Committee

(PDI-April 22 & 29, 2004)

REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
DEPARTMENT OF FINANCE
BUREAU OF INTERNAL REVENUE
Quezon City

2004

April 12, 2004

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Bureau of Internal Revenue (BIR) invites interested parties to apply for eligibility and to bid for the following:

I.	Name of Project	:	Comprehensive Maintenance Services for Emergency Generator Sets (EGS)
	Location of the Project	:	RCC Bldg., BIR National Office Revenue Data Center - Manila Revenue Data Center - Quezon City Revenue Data Center - Makati City
	Contract Duration	:	July 1 to December 31, 2004
	Approved Budget	:	P543,959.59
	Source of Funding	:	BIR's Appropriations

II.	Name of Project	:	Comprehensive Maintenance Services for Uninterruptible Power Supply (UPS)
	Location of the Project	:	RCC Bldg., and Command Center, BIR National Office Revenue Data Center - Manila Revenue Data Center - Quezon City Revenue Data Center - Makati City Metro Manila District Offices
	Contract Duration	:	July 1 to December 31, 2004
	Approved Budget	:	P555,344.59
	Source of Funding	:	BIR's Appropriations

All interested parties may get the bidding documents from the BAC Secretariat, c/o Procurement Division at Room 605, 6th Floor, BIR-NOB, Diliman, Quezon City starting **April 16, 2004**, upon payment of non-refundable fee of **Five Hundred Pesos (P500.00)** for each project.

A Pre-Bid Conference will be held on **April 29, 2004 at 1:30 p.m.** at the **3rd Floor, Executive Conference Room, BIR-NOB, Diliman, Quezon City**.

Deadline for the submission and opening of eligibility requirements, technical and financial proposals shall be on **May 11, 2004 at 1:30 p.m.** at the **3rd Floor, Executive Conference Room, BIR-NOB, Diliman, Quezon City**, and followed by the opening of the bids.

The criteria to be used by the BIR in the following: (a) eligibility check of prospective bidders; (b) examination and evaluation of bids; and (c) post-qualification, shall be on a non-discretionary "pass/fail" basis.

The BIR assumes no obligation whatsoever to compensate or indemnify the bidders for any excuse or loss that they may incur in the preparation of their bid. The BIR also reserves the right to reject any or all bids, waive any of the required formality therein and accept the bids most advantageous to the government.

For particulars, please inquire from the BAC Secretariat, thru the Chief, Procurement Division at Room 605, 6th Floor, BIR-NOB, Diliman, Quezon City or call telephone nos. 926-5547/926-5538 and 928-2026 (fax), or e-mail us at nelly.ibo@bir.gov.ph until **May 10, 2004**.

(Sgd.) **MILAGROS V. REGALADO**
Assistant Commissioner - Legal Service
Chairman, Bids and Awards Committee

(PDI - April 22, 2004)

REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
Province of Cebu

BIDS AND AWARDS COMMITTEE
Cebu Capitol, Cebu City

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Provincial Government of Cebu, thru its Bids and Awards Committee (BAC), invites all interested manufacturers, suppliers, dealers and/or distributors to apply for eligibility and to submit bids for the supply of various food requirements of jail prisoners at the Cebu Provincial Detention and Rehabilitation Center (CPDRC) for seven (7) months from June 1, 2004 to December 31, 2004, with an Approved Budget of Php 5,365,115.00.

In order to qualify for participation in the public bidding, the bidders should conform to the eligibility criteria as prescribed under Section 23.6 of the approved IRR-A of Republic Act No. 9184.

Eligibility requirements and bid forms, tender documents and request for quotation shall be available at the BAC Secretariat, Provincial General Services Office, DepEd Building, Capitol, Cebu City, within the government prescribed office hours, starting on Thursday, April 22, 2004, upon payment of a non-refundable fee of One Hundred Pesos Only (Php 100.00).

Pre-bid conference will be conducted on Friday, April 30, 2004, at 2:00 o'clock in the afternoon at the BAC conference room, Provincial General Services Office, DepEd building, Capitol, Cebu City.

Sealed envelopes containing the duly accomplished eligibility requirements, technical and financial proposals shall be received by the BAC Secretariat at the above-mentioned address not later than 10:00 o'clock in the morning on Thursday, May 13, 2004, and shall be publicly opened thereafter.

All particulars relative to the eligibility process, evaluation of bids, post-qualification and award of contract shall be governed by the Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR-A) of Republic Act No. 9184, otherwise known as the Government Procurement Reform Act.

The Bids and Awards Committee of the Province of Cebu reserves the right to reject any or all bids, to waive any defects or formality therein and to accept bids considered complying, responsive and most advantageous to the government.

For inquiry, please contact the Office of the BAC Secretariat at Telephone Nos. 253-9614, 253-3995 and 416-6065.

These requirements are posted at the BAC Bulletin Board, PGSO, DepEd bldg., Capitol, Cebu City.

(Sgd.) **EDUARDO T. HABIN**
Chairman

(PDI--April 22 & 28, 2004)

GIA

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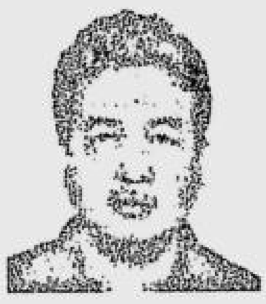
TO ALL SUPPLIERS AND CLIENTS OF NORTH STAR INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL, INC./ TQ3 TRAVEL SOLUTIONS/TQ3 NORTH STAR



NILO J. BALAGTAS

WHOSE PICTURE APPEARS ABOVE IS NO LONGER CONNECTED IN ANY MANNER WITH NORTHSTAR INT'L. TRAVEL, INC./TQ3 TRAVEL SOLUTIONS/TQ3 NORTH STAR. MR. BALAGTAS HAVING RESIGNED AS OF MARCH 19, 2004, IS NO LONGER ALLOWED TO USE WHATEVER PRIVILEGES AND BENEFITS HE ENJOYED WHILE AN EMPLOYEE OF NORTH STAR.

(PDI – April 22, 2004)

MARKETING INSTITUTE OF THE PHILIPPINES
The Education and Training Arm of the

PHILIPPINE MARKETING ASSOCIATION

invites you to a seminar on **BRAND MANAGEMENT**
(The Basics of Brand Marketing)

The concept of Brand Management has gone into an evolutionary process ever since it was introduced by P&G in 1972. Several multinational companies introduced their own version at various stages and the concept has been modified to adopt to individual company's working environment and management style. In this seminar, participants will learn the key essentials of the brand management function particularly the key functional tasks that deal extensively in developing and building brand equity, brand marketing positioning, brand strategies, revitalizing and managing brand over time, etc.

Schedule: **April 27, 28 & 30, 2004**
(Tuesday, Wednesday & Friday) 1:00 P.M. - 6:00 P.M.
ACCEED - AIM Conference Center, Makati City

Course Fee:		
	PMA Member	P 5,000.
	Non-PMA Member	P 6,000.

For inquiries, please call the
Philippine Marketing Association
Secretariat c/o Ms. Lydia Marinas
Tels: 634-5722; 634-4890 / Fax: 636-14
E-mail: pma@philonline.com
or lydiamm@edsamail.com.ph

Brand Renaissance

ON DEMAND BUSINESS SYMPOSIUM

Media G8way Corporation, in partnership with IBM Philippines Inc., held a businessmen's IT symposium on the "On Demand Business" model last April 15, attracting some 200 executives. Touted as the next phase of e-business, this model promotes, among others, the outsourcing of a company's non-core operations. Photo shows some of the key people behind the event (from left): Bernadette Nacario, IBM country marketing manager; Ibarra C. Gutierrez, Media G8way publisher and editor-in-chief; Pradeep Nair, software manager of the IBM software group for ASEAN/South Asia; Charles Bligh, IBM's Asia Pacific e-business on demand general manager; Delia Castañeda-Gutierrez, Media G8way president and CEO; Joaquin Quintos IV, IBM Philippines president and country general manager; Renato Jiao, IBM Business Services general manager; Erik Joseph Tabuena, IBM Global Services' business consulting services country manager; and Rene Domingo, Asian Institute of Management professor.

POEA

24-HR HOTLINES
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Philippine
Badminton
Tournaments

All-Star Invitational Championships

Ladies Singles	Irene Chiu VS Raquel Guerrero
Men's Singles	Arolas "Bogs" Amahit VS Ian Piencenaves
Ladies Doubles	Michelle Guerrero & Melody Villaceran VS Aurora Co & Rachel Guerrero
Men's Doubles	Bogie De Guia & Wally Fernandez VS Carlos Ventosa & Jaime Llanes
Mix Doubles	Martin Araneta & Amanda Carpo VS Wilson Frias & Jeanette Banquiles

Solar Sports	April 27 and 29, 2004	6-8 PM
Replays	April 28 and 30, 2004	3-5 PM

sportshouse
Kason BADMINTON RACKETS
INQUIRER
CROSSOVER
WAVE 89.1

C2O Corp: The entrance of a giant

THE MARKET of information highway has been a-buzzed for nearly a decade now. With all the recent inventions and innovations that are taking place nearly every nanosecond, the product-end users are all agog on which product to buy.

A marketing person's hand is all tied up on the latest strategies that they will be using to position their product, with distribution as one of the key aspects in making the product a big success.

In Singapore, C2O Corp is the forerunner in distributorship of printers and imaging peripherals, multimedia and digital audio entertainment, data communication and phone accessories, media, consumable and accessories. C2O Corp (formally known as Proton Computers) is a product of synergy of three leading companies. It was formed in October 2000 through the merger of Proton Computers, Fas Com Distribution and APS Technologies. C2O Corp is headed by Peng Eheo Chui as the managing director since 1984 and Peng Ciew Hong, director appointed last March 1993.

Each company has its own specialization and expertise, thus, these advantages are put together to come up with a formidable company. It aims to re-position and focus the business to face the tough challenges ahead by combining each company's resources and core competencies.

When they were starting, able managers were brought in to strengthen their channel business, and within a short time frame, C2O Corp has established itself and carved a niche in the industry.

C2O has established a strong network of resellers and customer in Singapore and in the region. The company's understanding of the market and their ability to respond to changes has made C2O Corp the preferred distributor of choice. It has a strong commitment of providing value-added services to its clients.

Researchers are provided to identify, understand and serve the evolving need of their customers to maintain the leadership position in the distribution of infocomm and lifestyle products. Today, they have a staff strength of 50 operating from their 20,000 sq. ft. head office in Jalan Pemimpin. The C2O and Epson City shops are located in Sim Lim Square and Funan IT Mall to support and fulfill the need of their valued resellers.

Some of the tools that they have used to ensure total customers' satisfaction are: mounting of IT exhibits/roadshows, conduct reseller/end-user workshops and training, service and repair, helpdesk and walk-in support, co participating in product launches and road shows.

Today, C2O represents many of the world's leading brands like Epson, Canon, Creative, Nokia, Casio, Motorola, NEC, Samsung, Pretec. Its principals have worked with them for many years and will continue to support them, as they expand their distribution into new areas and boundaries.

The same efficiency that they have practiced throughout the years is now here in the Philippines, ready and more than eager to be of service to the Filipino.

BEST HEALTH AND BEAUTY RETAILER

Watsons Philippines copped another achievement when it was conferred the '2004 Best Health and Beauty Retailer' by the Parangal ng Bayan Foundation Inc during the recent 19th Annual National Consumers Excellence Awards ceremonies at the Carlos P. Romulo auditorium of the RCBC Plaza in Makati City. Photo shows (from left) Arvin Ang, marketing administrative manager of SCMC; Anna Marie Garcia, vice president for operations of SM Supermalls; Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye; Grace Rivera, merchandise director of Watsons Philippines; Jin Jimenez, operations controller of Watsons Philippines; and Joseph Aguilar, area marketing manager of SCMC.

JOYA CONTRACT SIGNING

Joya at Rockwell contract signing culminates with a handshake between esteemed architect Willie V. Coscolluela (left) and Rockwell Land Corporation president and CEO Nestor J. Padilla (right). Witnessing the momentous event are vice president for technical services Nestor Omar Arce-Ignacio and assistant vice president for sales and marketing, Val Soliven.

Joya
at
ckwell

Abenson sweeps 2003 Dealer of the Year Awards

ABENSON, having first opened its doors in 1970 now cater to million of Filipino households for their appliance needs. To date, it has become the largest retail network having over 65 branches nationwide making Abenson the most conducive and convenient appliance retail outfit in the country.

Abenson's continued success is in lieu of the long-standing trust and loyalty of the Filipino market for several reasons. One, the company develops itself to better cater to its particular customer needs and expectations. Urban stores have lifestyle displays showcasing high technology Plasma TV's and state-of-the-art home theaters. Two, Abenson sells only branded appliances. Products sold in store are pre-selected for quality: only well-established brands are displayed in an Abenson store floor. This stamp of quality assures you of full manufacturer's warranty and a wide service network. Third, Abenson upgrades its backroom technology to give you fast service time and ease in appliance shopping. Lastly, value-added services like Extended Warranty, Door-to-Door delivery and flexible payment schemes are offered to customers to give them utmost convenience.

Abenson keeps strong relationships with its list of suppliers in order to provide Filipinos better choices when it comes to their home appliances needs. Working together with world-class brands, Abenson believes that customers win by having the best appliance deals. With this in place, Abenson has become the Filipinos' trusted appliance shop.

This year, Abenson has been given the highest distinction by the following brands Sony, Sharp, LG, Samsung, Condura, Kelvinator, Philips, and carrier as their 2003 "Dealer of the Year" and "Most Preferred Dealer" . As the brands' Dealer of the Year, Abenson achieved the highest sales compared with other appliance retailers. This signals that Abenson is in fact, the choice of many Filipinos. It shows that Abenson's stronger relationship with appliance manufacturers assure customers of the best value appliance deals.

Crown Pipes supports 30th UAP National Convention

THE UNITED Architects of the Philippines (UAP) held its 30th Annual National Convention at the Manila Hotel from April 15 to 17, with the theme "Rising to the Challenges of the New World".

Crown Pipes, world class uPVC pipes and fittings manufactured by Crown Asia Compounders Corp, extended its full support to the architects by participating in the 3-day Exhibition at the convention site.

As one of the more active players in the market today, Crown Pipes showcases its full line of quality products that meet premium requirements in the construction industry. The wide range of superior pipes on display starts with Crown Electrical, Crown Supreme and Crown Universal (multi-purpose) pipes. The outstanding features and certified quality of these electrical products generate an increasing preference among professionals and the public at large.

Crownflex is the only brand that offers Orange, White and Gray options for super-strong, long lasting, self-extinguishing and highly-flame resistant flexible pipes in the market. They are packaged in shrink-wrap protection for hassle-free storage and convenience. Crown electrical fittings and accessories come with its trademark of strong, high-impact and crush-resistant features. The ISO-certified company also produces and markets Husky Electrical Products that give extra protection for electrical wiring systems in residential, commercial and industrial construction projects.

Crown Blue caters to various types of potable connections for residential and building structures. These are extra strong potable pipes that are high-pressure resistant, non-corrosive and made from 100 percent virgin materials. With its proven excellence, Crown Blue offers real value and advantage for builders.

In 2003, the brand introduced its Crown Sanitary (DSW) pipes to serve the growing demand for sanitary requirements. Crown offers its Series 600/1000 ASTM, ISO Standard (Heavy Duty) and recently added its Series 500 ASTM for the quality but more affordability and budget-conscious market. The brand intends to make a difference in this category by producing consistently, high quality and dependable pipes.

Early this year, Crown entered the pressure main, high density PE piping system (ISO) category with the Crown HDPE Pipes. It is another specific area where the brand hopes to offer competitive quality to compliment its ever-growing range of products and further strengthen its market position.

Crown Pipes believes in nurturing its partnerships with today's architects and builders as it recognizes its own responsibility to the general public. Through its management acumen in manufacturing operations, the company has given the industry a brand that has consistently proven to be dependable professionally. Crown Pipes is conscientiously taking a high resolve to help raise the standards of construction products, thereby earning the growing trust and patronage of key players in the construction industry.

BITS Clips

3M joins Trans Sport Show

3M PHILIPPINES has confirmed its participation as a major sponsor of Trans Sport Show 2004, forthcoming this April 21 to 25 at the Megatrade Hall of SM Megamall B, Ortigas Center, Mandaluyong City. The company will present the latest 3M Car Care & Exterior Enhancement Products during the 5-day event. Organized by TradeShow International, Inc. (TSI), the show will pay tribute to the great Italian sports cars with a display of cars from Ferrari, Maserati, Alfa Romeo and Lancia. The show is sponsored by Motolite Batteries; Ambi Pur; 3M Philippines ; Lexbur Holidays International; EXO Armoring Corp ; Business-World ; Today; Digital Resources ; Infodyne Inc; Yehey!; AutoInustriya; C! Magazine; Jam 88.3 ; Magic 89.9 ; 99.5 RT ; Wave 89.1 ; 103.5 K-Lite ; 105.1 Crossover; Samsung; The Brain Computer; Skystar; Vantage Consulting & Solutions Inc, and Citibank.

2nd Zamboanga Peninsula Business Conference

SOME 500 investors, entrepreneurs and businessmen from Zamboanga Peninsula will meet for the 2nd Zamboanga Peninsula Business Conference (ZPBC), April 22 to 23, at the Zamboanga del Norte Convention Center in Dipolog City. Agriculture Secretary Luis Lorenzo Jr, Tourism Secretary Roberto Pagdanganan, Trade and Industry Secretary Cesar Purisima and Presidential Assistant for Mindanao Jesus Dureza lead the bevy of invited speakers, which also include David Fulton, US Embassy Counselor for Commercial Affairs. Local government officials led by Governor Isagani Amatong and Dipolog City Mayor Roberto Uy will welcome this year's ZBCP. The conference is hosted by Dipolog Chamber of Commerce and Industry led by its president Edwin Capili. Zamboanga Peninsula covers the provinces of Zamboanga del Norte, Zamboanga del Sur, Zamboanga Sibugay, Misamis Occidental, Sulu, Basilan and Tawi-Tawi.

BMA seminars for April

THIS April, Businessmaker Academy (BMA), a pioneering business and livelihood training center, offers the following Leadership & Team Empowerment seminars designed to augment and boost annual corporate summer outings. Effective Leadership Skills Development - "Key Principles to Focused Leadership", a lecture that empowers you to be an effective, focused and inspiring leader (Public Seminar: April 23, also available for corporate bookings). Effective Supervisory Skills Development - "Key Principles to Proactive Supervision", a workshop that trains you to be an effective and proactive supervisor (available for corporate bookings). Effective Team Building Workshop - "Key Principles for Team Success", a lecture that empowers your team with key steps to effective team building (available for corporate bookings). Held at BMA - Suite 1503A West Tower, PSE Bldg. (Tektite), Ortigas Center, these courses are open to the public for a minimal fee. For more information, call 687-4445/687-3416/687-4645.

PLC holds 7th anniversary

THE PHILIPPINE Laryngectomee Club shall hold its 7th year anniversary celebration and induction of officers for the year 2004 to 2006 on April 23, at 9 a.m. at the Valdes Hall, Veterans Memorial Medical Center. Laryngectomees or "neck breathers", ENT doctors, speech therapist and other paramedical persons involved in the care of laryngeal cancer patients are invited. The inducting officer shall be Sec. Roberto Pagdanganan, DOT Secretary.

Int'l banker is Rotary Club of Manila guest

SEVILLA

JOHN Sevilla, respected Filipino international investment banker, will be the guest of honor and speaker in the General Membership Meeting of the Rotary Club of Manila today, 12 noon at the Shangri-La Makati Hotel, Quezon Ballroom. Sevilla is expected to discuss his eight-year experience as an investment banker specializing in investments in financially distressed companies throughout Asia. Sevilla, who was most recently executive director of Goldman Sachs (Asia), was also vice president of Solomon Brothers Hong Kong LTD, assistant director of Peregrine Fixed Income (Hong Kong/Jakarta) Ltd and associate director of Stanford & Poor's Ratings Group New York.

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EARTHDAY 2004
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BUSINESS

Neda pushing for further liberalization of local industries

By Michelle V. Remo

THE NATIONAL Economic and Development Authority said it was necessary for the government to open more industries to full foreign ownership to achieve its medium-term goal of raising the country's economic growth to a range of 6 to 7 percent.

Neda Director General Romulo Neri said in an interview that it was about time for the country to further liberalize industries to allow the entry of much-needed investments. He said the country needed to increase foreign investments by more than five times to accelerate economic growth, from the current 4 percent in terms of gross domestic product.

Neri, who is also the country's economic planning secretary, said foreign investments inflow per year averaged at only $1.5 billion. To help attain the desired economic growth level of at least 6 percent, he said, foreign investments should increase to about $8 billion.

"We need to immediately amend the Constitution and open up our industries. The key to growth is really investments, but the industries that foreign companies want to invest in are still limited to Filipino ownership," he said.

According to the Neda, industries that should be liberalized for the country to take advantage of potentially huge investments are media, education, mining, public utilities and services. It said these industries should be liberalized to also provide more opportunities to Filipinos and keep them from going abroad to look for jobs.

Neri said investments made by Filipinos accounted for only 20 percent of the country's GDP, compared with the 30-percent share of local investments to GDP in other countries.

The country's chief economist said local investments used to account for 26 percent of the country's GDP. He said, however, that the figure was still lower than those of other countries because of perceived risks in doing business in the Philippines, such as intervention by courts to economic issues.

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ASEAN INTEGRATION

RP seeks zero tariff on electronics by '05

By Ronnel W. Domingo

TRADE Secretary Cesar V. Purisima said the country would push for the removal by 2005 of the tariffs on electronics and semiconductor products traded within the Asean.

This, he said, would be recommended during the two-day Asean Economic Ministers' Retreat in Singapore, which started yesterday.

Purisima, who left yesterday for the meeting, said the recommendation formed part of a draft road map for the electronics industry which would be presented to the body.

The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (Asean) groups include Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam.

"We are (making the call on the body) to take the lead in boosting trade and integrating the region into a one-market environment," he said.

The proposal—if approved—is a bold step as it would be the first among 11 sectors to have zero tariff by next year, the official added.

Aside from electronics, the 11 sectors named for Asean integration included wood-based and automotive industries, rubber-based and textile/apparel industries, agro-based and fisheries industries, e-Asean and healthcare industries, and airlines and tourism industries.

Purisima said the current Asean electronics value chain was spread out across borders such that the member countries, except Singapore and Malaysia, were not equipped with a strong supplier base to support the manufacturing of individual electronic firms.

"The Asean can be a supplier base like China if it were to collectively take advantage of its competitive strengths by adopting an industry clustering approach and act as a single production base with zero tariff," he said.

According to data from the Department of Trade and Industry, electronic accounted for half of the total merchandise imports in February at $1.49 billion.

The amount is 17 percent higher than the $1.27 billion in electronics import bill in the same period last year.

DTI officials said the in the sector was significant in that the imported goods were major inputs on products that are, in turn, exported.

The electronics and semiconductor industry is the country's biggest export earner.

Mirant projects to boost power supply in Aklan

TWO NEW power plants worth around P600 million and a project that will install submarine transmission lines in Boracay are expected to give the island adequate power supply to meet its growing demand.

Mirant Global Philippines Corp., a joint venture between independent power producer Mirant Philippines Corp. and Metrobank subsidiary Global Business Holdings Inc., earlier started construction of the two diesel plants with capacities of 7.5 megawatts (MW) and 5 MW in Nabas and New Washington, Aklan.

Upon completion, Mirant Global will operate the plants under a 20-year build-own-operate agreement with Aklan Electric Cooperative Inc.

In a statement, Mirant said the 7.5-MW plant was designed to provide electricity to business and residential areas in Boracay. The 5-MW plant will cater to the power needs of other Aklan municipalities.

"These projects are part of (Mirant Global's) program to expand its operations in the Visayas," Mirant Philippines vice president Paul Flake said.

National Transmission Corp., for its part, will soon start implementing the Small Island Submarine Interconnection Development (SISID) Program, which will rid Boracay of recurring and potential power problems that may affect its future growth. *Abigail L. Ho*

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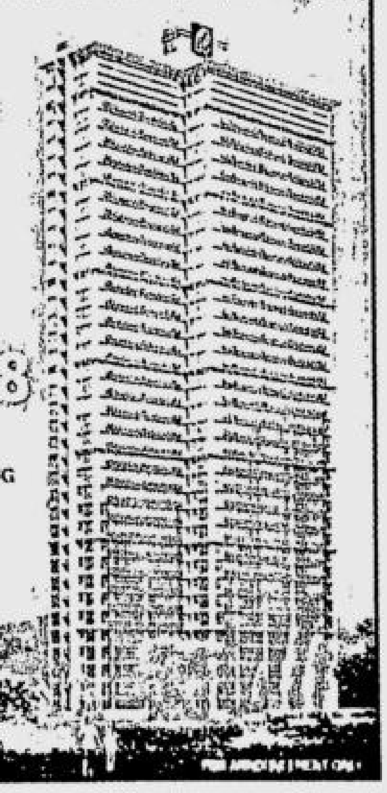

BD BANCO DE ORO
12 ADB Avenue Ortigas Center, Mandaluyong City
CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF CONDITION
(Bank and its Subsidiaries and Affiliates)
As of March 23, 2004

ASSETS		AMOUNT
Cash and Cash Items	P	1,927,288,392
Due from Bangko Sentral		3,174,088,394
Due from Other Banks		3,331,959,224
Interbank Loans Receivable		13,934,590,731
Trading Account Securities (Net)		7,076,963,262
Investments in Bonds & Other Debt Instruments (Net)		50,879,377,004
Loans, Discounts & Advances (Net)		57,384,482,267
Underwriting Accounts (Net)		100,000,000
Equity Investments (Net)		1,614,510,687
Bank Premises, Furniture, Fixtures & Equipment (Net)		995,330,729
Other Assets (Net):		
Property Owned/Acquired		4,937,704,055
Others		9,030,826,383
TOTAL ASSETS	P	154,387,121,128
LIABILITIES		
Demand Deposits	P	3,127,681,489
Savings Deposits		61,538,584,373
Time Deposits		39,743,948,492
Due to Bangko Sentral		81,353,066
Outstanding Checks/Payment Orders		356,536,388
Bills Payable		
BSP - Rediscounts/Special Programs		115,784,713
Interbank Borrowings		9,640,397,216
Deposit Substitutes		3,100,000,000
Others		15,527,959,951
Unearned Income and Other Deferred Credits		170,766,611
Other Liabilities		4,323,081,393
Unsecured Subordinated Debt(Inclusive of Unamortized Premium/Discount)		1,126,640,000
TOTAL LIABILITIES	P	138,852,733,692
Minority Interest in Allied Undertakings/Subsidiaries/Affiliates	P	12,890,443
CAPITAL ACCOUNTS		
Capital Stock	P	10,882,502,238
Surplus		4,641,349,209
Surplus Reserves		40,041,854
Other Capital Accounts		(42,396,108)
TOTAL CAPITAL ACCOUNTS		15,521,496,993
TOTAL LIABILITIES AND CAPITAL ACCOUNTS	P	154,387,121,128
CONTINGENT ACCOUNTS		
Unused Commercial Letters Of Credit	P	7,031,178,221
Bills for Collection		1,383,715,400
Spot/Future Exchange Bought		(19,033,929,650)
Spot/Future Exchange Sold		16,252,169,100
Assets Held Under Trust and Investment Management Agreements		70,658,464,811

Invested in	
Government Securities	41,576,634,824
Other Securities, Debt Instruments and Shares of Stock	7,391,082,974
Loans and Discounts	11,778,531,012
Other Assets	9,812,236,001
Accountabilities:	
Trust & Other Fiduciary	14,892,875,920
Common Trust Funds	44,538,420,317
Investment/Fund Management	11,066,974,583
Unearned Income & Other Accountabilities	60,193,991

Other Contingent Accounts		17,280,161,037
TOTAL CONTINGENT ACCOUNTS	P	93,471,759,513
Other Information		
1. Deposits of		
a) Government	P	164,077,801
b) Banks		929,185,055
c) Trust Department		4,225,373,025

2. List of Bank's Financial Subsidiaries:
   - a) BDO Financial Services Inc
   - b) BDO Capital and Investments Corporation
   - c) BDO Card Corporation
   - d) BDO Private Bank Inc

REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES)
Mandaluyong City, MM) S.S.

We, LUCY CO DY and NESTOR V. TAN of the above-mentioned bank do solemnly swear that all matters set forth in the above statement of condition are true and correct to the best of our knowledge and belief.

(Sgd.) LUCY CO DY
Senior Vice President
(Signature Over Printed Name)

(Sgd.) NESTOR V. TAN
President
(Signature Over Printed Name)

SUBSCRIBED AND SWORN to before me this 14th day of April 2004 affiants exhibiting their Community Tax Certificate No. 14230368 issued at Mandaluyong City on February 27, 2004 and Community Tax Certificate No. 21389644 issued at San Juan, Metro Manila on Jan. 19, 2004 respectively.

Doc. No. 27
Book No. 7
Page No. III
Series of 2004

Atty. MA. CECILIA SALAZAR - SANTOS
Notary Public Until 12/31/2004
PTR No. 0294040
Mandaluyong City, 01/07/2004

BD BANCO DE ORO
12 ADB Avenue Ortigas Center, Mandaluyong City
STATEMENT OF CONDITION
(Head Office and Branches)
As of March 23, 2004

ASSETS		AMOUNT
Cash and Cash Items	P	1,927,288,392
Due from Bangko Sentral		3,017,714,866
Due from Other Banks		2,523,221,534
Interbank Loans Receivable		14,835,902,731
Trading Account Securities (Net)		5,060,990,092
Investments in Bonds & Other Debt Instruments (Net)		46,961,665,180
Loans, Discounts & Advances (Net)		57,448,505,258
Equity Investments (Net)		5,326,913,568
Bank Premises, Furniture, Fixtures & Equipment (Net)		964,837,068
Other Assets (Net)		
Property Owned/Acquired		4,920,527,805
Others		8,562,018,424
TOTAL ASSETS	P	151,549,574,938
LIABILITIES		
Demand Deposits	P	2,345,036,810
Savings Deposits		61,660,982,688
Time Deposits		38,759,784,830
Due to Bangko Sentral		70,679,204
Outstanding Checks/Payment Orders		354,351,112
Bills Payable		
BSP - Rediscounts/Special Programs		115,784,713
Interbank Borrowings		9,357,057,216
Deposit Substitutes		3,100,000,000
Others		14,844,439,900
Unearned Income and Other Deferred Credits		170,766,611
Other Liabilities		4,150,289,501
Unsecured Subordinated Debt (Inclusive of Unamortized Premium/Discount)		1,126,640,000
TOTAL LIABILITIES	P	136,064,812,585
CAPITAL ACCOUNTS		
Capital Stock	P	10,932,477,438
Surplus		4,549,613,538
Surplus Reserves		40,041,854
Other Capital Accounts		(37,370,477)
TOTAL CAPITAL ACCOUNTS		15,484,762,353
TOTAL LIABILITIES AND CAPITAL ACCOUNTS	P	151,549,574,938
CONTINGENT ACCOUNTS		
Unused Commercial Letters Of Credit	P	7,031,178,221
Bills for Collection		1,383,715,400
Spot/Future Exchange Bought		(13,070,389,583)
Spot/Future Exchange Sold		10,276,962,020
Assets Held Under Trust and Investment Management Agreements		70,475,359,649

Invested in	
Government Securities	41,576,634,824
Other Securities, Debt Instrument and Shares of Stock	7,307,057,812
Loans and Discounts	11,778,531,012
Other Assets	9,812,236,001
Accountabilities:	
Trust & Other Fiduciary	14,609,770,758
Common Trust Funds	44,538,420,317
Investment/Fund Management	11,066,974,583
Unearned Income & Other Accountabilities	60,193,991

Other Contingent Accounts		4,170,095,610
TOTAL CONTINGENT ACCOUNTS	P	80,267,821,317
Other Information		
1. Deposits of		
a) Government	P	164,077,801
b) Banks		929,185,055
c) Trust Department		4,225,373,025

2. Compliance with Magna Carta Law.

	6% for Small Enterprises	2% for Medium Enterprises
Prescribed Ratio of Compliance	6% for Small Enterprises	2% for Medium Enterprises
Actual Compliance	6.70%	12.91%

3. Amount of non-performing loans	5,033,613,701
4. Ratio of non-performing loans to total loan portfolio	7.45%
5. Amount of classified loans and other risk assets	11,029,134,000
6. General provision for loan losses	1,129,103,039
7. Specific provision for loan losses	2,181,007,922
8. Return on equity (ROE)	10.72%
9. Amount of DOSRI loans/advances	7,082,900,498
10. Ratio of DOSRI loans/advances to total loan portfolio	10.56%
11. Amount of past due DOSRI loans/advances	4,430,705
12. Ratio of past due DOSRI loans/advances to total loan portfolio	0.01%

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Mandaluyong City, MM) S.S.

We, LUCY CO DY and NESTOR V. TAN of the above-mentioned bank do solemnly swear that all matters set forth in the above statement of condition are true and correct to the best of our knowledge and belief.

(Sgd.) LUCY CO DY
Senior Vice President
(Signature Over Printed Name)

(Sgd.) NESTOR V. TAN
President
(Signature Over Printed Name)

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Atty. MA. CECILIA SALAZAR - SANTOS
Notary Public Until 12/31/2004
PTR No. 0294040
Mandaluyong City, 01/07/2004

MOTORING
E-mail: pr_motoring@inquirer.com.ph
Editor Cesar D. Mangawang

INDUCIL'S IRONIC TWIST

Powering up your car can save fuel

By Tessa R. Salazar

EVERY car enthusiast's dream is to dig out more horsepower from his or her car. New or old, stock cars could be a big letdown if they can't literally keep up with the competition. But with a little tinkering here and there, stock cars can be transformed into feisty little performance autos.

To the ordinary spectator, these tweaks and turns on the engines can be seen as just downright expensive and unnecessary—especially now, they say, when fuels are just too expensive to be used other than helping its occupants drive to work and earn a living to buy food and more fuel.

DIXON Ang, ATI vice president Marty Diaz de Rivera and ATI Group president Antonio T. Inducil LESTER DIZON, SPEED

Enhancing engines

One of the more important steps enthusiasts do in the process of "enhancing" their engines is modifying the car's cylinder head. A cylinder head has tiny perforations that can be likened to one's lungs. Any restriction on the cylinder head can also be likened to asthmatic breathing, thus limited power. Modifying the car's cylinder head would be just like using the nebulizer to clear up the lung's passageways.

But then, of course, the cylinder head had nothing to do with fuel economy, right? The devil-may-care racing boys in the western world modified their cylinder heads for racing, not really to save up on fuel.

Street economics

Count on a Filipino motivated by circumstances to turn this belief upside down. During the energy crisis of the '80s when it all came down to gas rationing in the Philippines, car enthusiast Antonio "Butch" T. Inducil tried to apply some of what he knew in the racing process on street economics.

Butch thought of a modification he used in races that could be appreciated by regular motorists. His firm ATI Group called it Headworks, and it had been saving cars which had undergone that process at least 15 percent in fuel consumption. The engine, which used to run on only 9 or 10 km per liter, could now go for another 1.5 km.

Motorists who heard this during the time couldn't resist the savings and the additional power that went with it and trooped to his ATI shop in Manila. They were not disappointed.

Then and now, almost 20 years later, the key process in Headworks remains essentially unchanged—and that's clearing up the passageways needed by the engine to breathe. "When you breathe and your lungs' capacity has an engine size of a 1,600cc (1.6-liter), but then you have restrictions along the airway—the air that enters can only fill 1,400cc or even less. That means power is not maximized," Butch explained.

Butch further explained the problem using a four-lane highway that allows only two lanes to be used. Congestion ensues, and traffic slows down. Cars coming out of the traffic emerge slowly, too. That's what happens inside the head, Butch said. "If I can make that four lanes use all four lanes, then smoothen out the entire road, then the flow of traffic is faster."

In his shop, Butch supervises everything. He cleans everywhere that the air passes through, and everything is smoothened out. Contours and curves are changed, designs are altered. "The 1.6-liter 'lungs' of your car is filled up no longer with a 1,400, but higher than that, 1,500 or up to 90 percent," he said.

That amount, Butch said, is already a marked improvement, considering what the factory rolled out in the first place. "If your car is just stock, and you don't modify, you only have 75-percent engine efficiency. But if the head is modified, the fill-up can be as high as 95 percent," he said.

Headworks, Butch attests, can be performed on all kinds of cars and trucks, and on any engine.

Volumetric efficiency

Auto technologists call Butch's Headworks' end-results as "volumetric efficiency." An engine that is "light-footed" means drivers don't have to step on the accelerator that much. "Heavy-footed" engines mean that for its drivers to come up to speed, they would have to step harder and longer on the gas pedal, thus unnecessarily releasing more fuel.

Butch sums up how cars continuously breathe: Air enters through the intake air filter, to the intake manifold and ports, then comes out through the exhaust port, headers and exhaust muffler. "If I can improve the process that takes in air and takes it out, more air will come in. That's where the efficiency lies."

With cylinder head modification, more torque is felt and you consume less gas. The process maximizes the airflow through the design, contour of ports and smoothness of ports, and this maximizes the torque and combustion potential of the engine. And with the combined efficiencies, you get fuel economy.

POWERING/ C3

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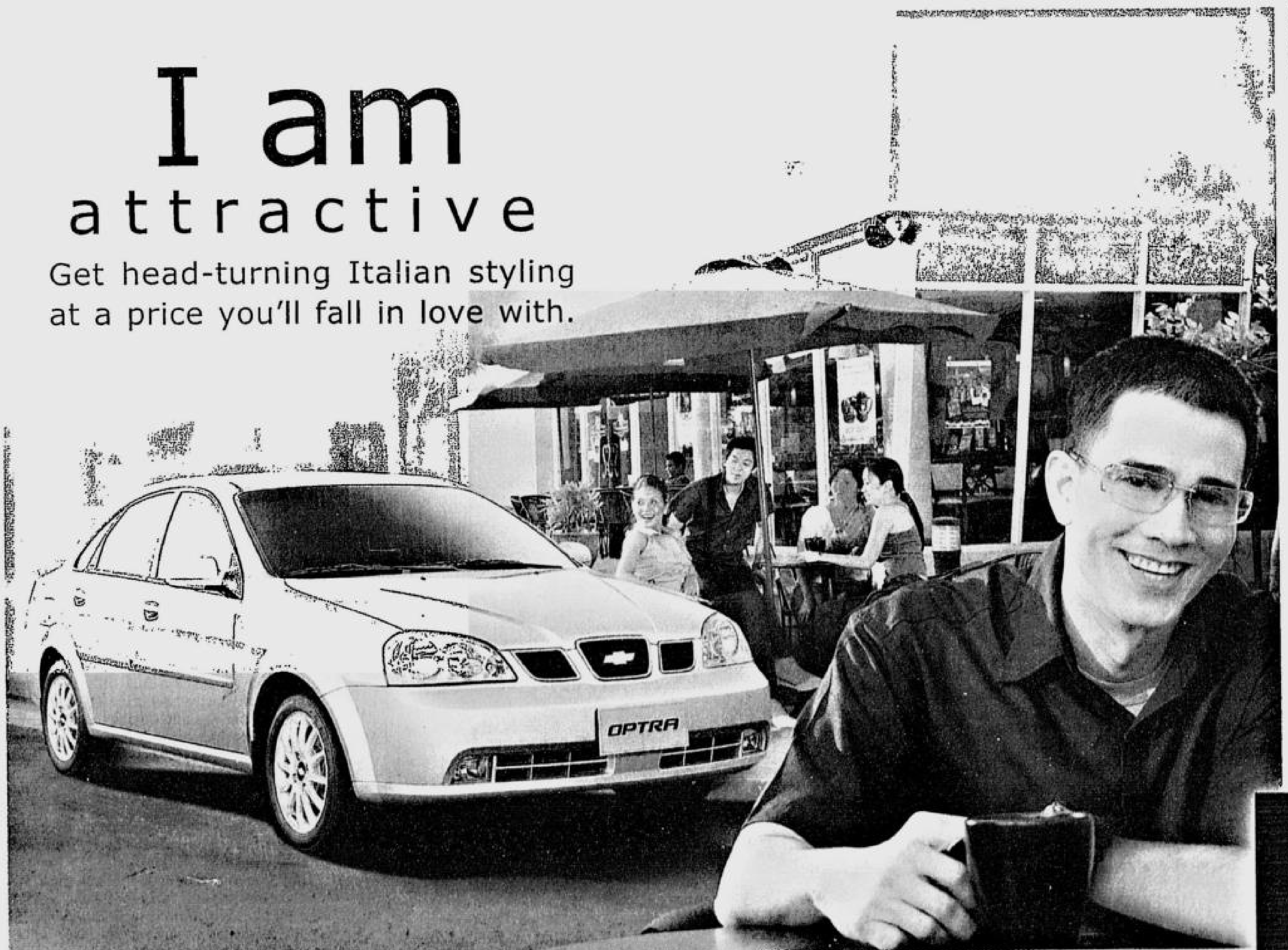

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Text and photos by Charles E. Buban

WE were in effect fast moving billboards zooming along the North Luzon Expressway (as we headed to Subic Freeport) last week.

Motorists and those we passed along the highway can't help but gaze at our convoy wondering who we were and what was up with our extraordinary collection of SUVs adorned with various advertisements.

The vehicles carrying us were indeed, extraordinary: Cadillac Escalade, first- and second-generation Hummers (H1 and H2), Mercedes AMG G55 Wagon, customized Honda CR-V, fully accessorized Isuzu Trooper, Mitsubishi Pajero and Toyota Land Cruiser.

But they were not just for show.

FROM LEFT are Arvin Lim, Benedict Go, Francis Heslet, Sammy Liuson, Atoy Llave and Jimmy Garcia.

"Each of these vehicles is equipped with at least one of the performance products and services that our group provide—Bazo or MB Motoring alloy wheels, Nitto tires, Bilstein suspension systems, Xenon High Intensity Dischange (HiD) headlamps, Thule roof rack systems or customizations from A-Toy Paints and Bodykits," revealed Sammy Liuson of Wheel Gallery Inc. who was also acting spokesman for the group.

Shared passion

A shared passion to customize and accessorize vehicles united this group Liuson is referring to, composed of young businessmen based in San Juan and Quezon City.

Apart from Liuson's Wheel Gallery (dealer of after-market wheel and tire brands Concept One, Diamo, Bazo, MKW and MB Motoring and Nitto) the group was also composed of Arvin Lim's H&R-Bilstein (dealer of Bilstein brand of suspension systems from Germany); Benedict Go's Hummer Philippines-Xenon Bulbs (importer of H1 and dealer of Xenon HiD headlamps); Francis Heslet's Thule/EGR Philippines (dealer of Thule load carrier systems from Sweden); Atoy Llave, Atoy Paint and Bodykits (automotive performance shop); and Jimmy Garcia's Auto Stadium (importer of exotic vehicles).

"There were no formalities (in organizing the group). But since our businesses complement one another we decided to put in order our network two years ago so that our clients would have an easier time transforming their vehicles into a work of art," explained Liuson.

Well known

Go noted that their businesses are well-known to those who frequent local motoring trade shows.

"Filipino motorists just love to make their vehicle better reflect their personality and sense of style so they visit trade shows to have an idea," he noted.

But Go revealed there are still a lot more automotive enthusiasts out there who still don't know where to go or whom to talk to that sometimes they are shortchanged like getting no warranty from the product they bought.

"This was one reason we set up our network. Since we have different products and services that can be incorporated in one particular vehicle, we can assure our customers of the quality of our products or services," Go said.

Know what they want

"Our customers pretty much know what they want. We just help them get it," explained Llave who can customize any vehicle with four wheels brought to them.

Customizing not only involves making the vehicle look esthetically appealing, according to Llave.

"We also need to ensure that everything we put in the vehicle will improve its performance like its aerodynamic and handling properties," he explained.

Customizing vehicles is a long-standing tradition in this country despite the economic slump and the group is determined to capitalize on this steady growing market.

NLEX . . .

From page C4

hydrogen, using city gas delivered to households via a pipeline. It then generates electricity with its built-in fuel cell for supply to households, with the heat produced simultaneously channeled for use in air conditioning."

* * *

I have not seen Arnel for quite some time now. But each time he reconnects with me, he comes up with a gem. Thus, to continue on his latest opus:

"With an output capacity of 5 kilowatts, the HES is also able to supply hydrogen to fuel cell-driven autos, which are expected to come into much greater use in the near future.

"Honda is trying to make the HES smaller in size and more efficient before commercializing it."

* * *

Arnel Doria has also said: "Mazda is preparing to commercialize a hydrogen-powered rotary engine in three years. But Honda is the only automaker developing an energy-supply infrastructure as well."

Why?

Said Arnel: "Honda is on the frontline of a global race to develop fuel cell-driven cars. The company last year developed a new type of fuel cell car capable of starting the engine even at very low temperatures. Honda expects the cost of its fuel cell autos to be cut to only 10 percent of the current levels in the near future."

Located next to Honda's Los Angeles research facility is a plant producing hydrogen by dissolving water with electricity generated by a solar battery.

If hydrogen is produced through the dissolution of city gas and carbon dioxide, a global warming gas is also produced. But if the HES is combined with a solar battery, "That will be an ideal kind of hydrogen supply infrastructure free from CO_2," said Arnel, quoting Honda president Takeo Fukui.

* * *

QUOTE ME. Avoid giving pursuit to a bus or truck that's trying to overtake a vehicle because the hugeness of the bus/truck blocks your view of an oncoming vehicle from the opposite direction.

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1. Customers who purchase any Isuzu Crosswind variant, whether through outright cash payment or financing, from any authorized Isuzu dealership nationwide from March 1 to May 7, 2004 are eligible to join the raffle.

2. With each purchase of an Isuzu Crosswind, the customer will be given one (1) raffle ticket for a chance to win the Grand Prize. The raffle ticket must be filled-out with COMPLETE NAME, ADDRESS, TEL. NUMBER, and affixed SIGNATURE and dropped in drop boxes located in the participating dealership where product was purchased.

3. Aside from the raffle ticket, the customer will also be given a free premium item from Isuzu, depending on the Crosswind variant purchased:
i. Purchase of either Crosswind XL, XT, or XTRM, the customer will be given a Coleman Cooler for free
ii. Purchase of either Crosswind XUV or XUVi, the customer will be given a Roof Basket for free
iii. Assigned variant freebie may not be interchanged with another variant freebie

*4. In the Grand Raffle draw, four winners will be drawn, two for the Metro Manila area and two for the provincial area.

5. Winners will be given a choice as to which prize they would like to avail of:

a. Grand Prize Option 1 – A brand-new Isuzu 4x2 D-MAX Manual Transmission

b. Grand Prize Option 2 – A 100% rebate on the actual retail cost of Crosswind purchased (rebate excludes cost of LTO Registration, car insurance, shipping fees, and chattel mortgage)

***6. Deadline for submission of entries is on May 7, 2004.**

*7. **Drawing of winners is on May 15, 2004** at Isuzu Commonwealth 5:00PM in the presence of Isuzu Philippines Corporation officials and a representative from the DTI. Drawing of winners will be telecast on Auto Extreme at 3:30PM in Channel 9, two weeks after the draw date.

8. A participant can win only once.

9. All prizes are TAX-PAID, no fees are required upon claiming of prizes.

10. Winners will be notified via telephone and registered mail. Winners will be announced in leading newspapers.

11. Winners may claim their prizes at the Customer Relations Department of Isuzu Philippines Corporation, Laguna Technopark, Sta. Rosa Laguna upon presentation of a valid ID, winning stub and registered mail.

12. Prizes not claimed within 60 days from receipt of notification will be forfeited in favor of Isuzu Philippines Corporation with the prior approval of the DTI.

13. Employees of Isuzu Philippines Corporation, authorized dealerships of Isuzu Philippines Corporation, and Great Wall Advertising Philippines, Inc. including their relatives up to the 3rd degree of consanguinity or affinity are disqualified from joining.

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Beware of Baguio's number coding scheme

ON THE ROAD

Aida Sevilla-Mendoza

IT'S summer and time to motor to Baguio to escape the heat, but beware! Baguio City has its own number-coding scheme. Patterned after the Metro Manila Development Authority's "voluntary traffic reduction scheme" (although there's nothing voluntary about it), Baguio's number-coding ordinance was approved and began to be implemented on Feb. 26, 2003. For those who have long been absent from Metro Manila, the number-coding (sometimes called color-coding) scheme prevents motorists, under pain of a P500 fine, from using their cars from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. one day a week depending on the ending number of their vehicle's license plate. If the ending number is 1 or 2, Monday is carless day for you; 3 or 4, Tuesday is out, 5 or 6, Wednesday; 7 or 8, Thursday; 9 or 0, Friday.

J.M. Mantaring Jr., vice president and treasurer of Automobile Association Philippines (formerly the Philippine Motor Association), was unaware of Baguio City's number-coding scheme. Leaving Manila at 3 a.m. one day last month, Mantaring entered Baguio City via the Marcos Highway just before 7 a.m.

The sign

Unfortunately, the ending number of the license plate of Mantaring's car was one that banned the vehicle from being used that day. To make matters worse, Mantaring failed to notice a sign board at the city entrance advising visitors to get an exemption from the number-coding scheme by dropping by the nearest police station. This advisory is posted at all entrances to the city but since so many other signs and billboards are also posted, it is easy to overlook the one about number-coding. The Baguio procedure calls for the motorist to drive to the nearest police station for a one-way pass to City Hall where he pays P300 for an exemption that is valid for one day.

However, since Mantaring had overlooked the sign board, he was spotted and followed by one of the motorcycle cops who were waiting along the hospital rotunda. When Mantaring disembarked at Star Café for breakfast shortly after 7 a.m., the motorcycle cop accosted him and told him he would have to pay the P500 fine for violating the number-coding rule.

Unaware

Mantaring thinks that many out-of-town motorists are unaware of Baguio City's number-coding scheme because when he went to City Hall, there were more than half a dozen other Baguio visitors lining up to also pay the P500 fine. "This is tourist season in Baguio," Mantaring wrote in his e-mail to this column. "We might be doing a public service by publishing a warning to save motorists not only the money, but also the hassle and unwelcome feeling caused by a prime tourist destination that people visit for relaxation."

Speaking of the number-coding scheme, MMDA Traffic Operations Center Director Angelito Vergel de Dios was reported last Monday as saying that vehicles bearing commemorative plates, even those approved by the Land Transportation Office, are not exempted from MMDA's number-coding scheme. Vergel de Dios' statement puts the MMDA on a collision course with Interior Secretary Jose D. Lina Jr. Last January, Lina wrote to Philippine National Police Director General Hermogenes E. Ebdane Jr. about the Alay-Lakad Foundation's 31st anniversary commemorative plates, 500 of which were issued by the Department of Transportation and Communications for the Foundation's fund-raising activities this year to benefit the out-of-school youth.

Exempted

"The public motorists who will avail of the plates shall be exempted from the MMDA's coding system," Lina informed Ebdane. "It has been observed by the Foundation that some complaints were elevated to their office by previous plate buyers due to nonacknowledgement of that privilege by our police officers assigned on the streets." Accordingly, Lina, who is a member of the Foundation's board of trustees, sought Ebdane's support of the Foundation's noble project "by directing our concerned officers to extend courtesy to motorists whose cars bear the Alay-Lakad commemorative plates."

The Alay-Lakad's 31st anniversary plates, by the way, are the only commemorative plates recognized by the NAKTF (National Anti-Kidnapping Task Force) as exempted from its "No Plates, No Travel" policy. In a letter to Alay-Lakad Foundation president Frank A. Evaristo last March 29, NAKTF Chief Angelo T. Reyes wrote that only the said plates will be allowed by NAKTF "as this is the only one acknowledged as valid in the LTO list."

* * *

TODAY'S BUMPER STICKER: The shortest distance between two points is under construction.

* * *

E-mail comments to asevilla@inquirer.com.ph.

Powering . . .

From page C1

The 'flow bench'

Butch says that modifying cylinder heads is like "port and polishing"—a term for enthusiasts. In shops that are not fitted with the proper equipment, port and polish is hit-or-miss, because without the equipment, even an expert port and polisher wouldn't know what happens inside the cylinder head.

Butch's ATI shop in Silang, Cavité, has the facility and measuring instruments needed to simulate cylinder heads' function. They can precisely measure the flow of air during and after the modification. Like a doctor equipped with X-rays and scanning machines, Butch can actually "see" how the engine breathes.

Butch calls his key instrument the "flow bench." "A flow bench is an instrument to check for flow, characteristics and air velocity. Every time you change or redesign the ports of the head, then you know what's going on."

"Here, we don't have to guess. We perform accuracy tests. Before we release the cylinder heads, it has to pass the standard for the flow bench. It should be able to give us the right data."

Modification types

Headworks was an ATI Group trademark until many other shops started copying it. Street cars, super street cars and the pro-series are the three modification types that could result from doing headworks. Butch highly recommends the pro-series modification, because that's where one would get the full benefits of maximum power and economy out of the car. The process involves the removal and reinstallation of heads and replacement of essential parts. The costs can reach up to P25,000.

Headworks is a one-time process, Butch says, that can add to the car's resale value. With the Headworks sticker and certificate, potential buyers would know the car has been modified.

Headworks is best felt, of course, on long, regular drives. "Those who drive about 150 km a day will make them save, adding two or three km per liter, that's big savings," Butch said.

Would it be advisable to do Headworks on cars fresh from the showrooms? Butch replied that he gets clients who got their cars fresh from the dealerships. "Mass-produced cars are assembled really fast. And unless your car is exotic like Porsche and Ferrari, with heads designed better and price tags that go with these, then you shouldn't expect manufacturers to spend so much in the production and design."

Butch, for his part, has done headworks on all his personal cars—even in his diesel engines. He has modified a 1979 Lancer, and improved its fuel consumption by 15 percent and its 0 to 100 kph performance by 20 percent.

Butch has taken his innovation across the Pacific. He's now busy running his performance shop in Vancouver, Canada. Guess the specialty of the house: Headworks, of course.

"Headworks is an instant hit there," Butch says with a smile.

Postscript: Butch recently built the record holders at sub 10s (running near the 10-second mark)—the 700 hp Nissan Skyline R 34 GTR and the 400 hp track attack Evo 6.

He maintains the engine and transmission of the fleet of Victory Liner, Philtranco, JAC Liner, Rabbit and other PHIBOAP members. He can be reached at atidiesel@shaw.ca.

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NLEX going great guns

FULL TANK

Al Mendoza

THE ONGOING project to transform the North Luzon Expressway (NLEX) into a world-class artery going up North has gotten sterling grades from the majority of our motorists who went home to their roots during the Holy Week.

I only got one adverse comment. In a letter, Dan Palma of Urdaneta, Pangasinan, said: "Hi Al: I felt like I was on board an airplane when I traveled at the North Luzon Expressway the first time. But after a few months, the smooth surface felt like *'umaalon'* (sea waves). You could feel it when you change lanes and, surely, it could get worse as the months go by. Thanks and regards."

I think Dan's observation is valid. Please take note, Mr. Ping de Jesus?

* * *

While at it, it is noteworthy to note that the expansion, if not beautification, of the NLEX is in tune with the times.

Do you know that toll roads are now being used in 18 developing and developed countries in the world? These countries include five East Asian countries with developing toll road systems (China, Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand and the Philippines). The five countries with developed toll road systems include France, Italy, Japan, Spain and the United States. The seven other countries and a region using world-class toll roads are Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, the Hong Kong Special Administration Region [SAR], Hungary, Mexico and the United Kingdom.

Modesty aside, I've seen their toll systems, except Argentina, Brazil, Colombia and Hungary. I was in Chile in 1998 and I saw how advanced its toll system is; do you know that much of this vehicular "coding system" that we now have was mainly inspired by Chile's own "plate number system"?

* * *

It is now a globally accepted fact that the use of toll roads is associated with higher economic growth levels. Transportation is now even considered a commodity that is not exempt from rules that govern the way all other commodities are purchased and used in market economies.

Look, because of massive improvements and world-class maintenance of toll roads, travel time and costs of travel are greatly reduced—encouraging more people to "consume" more travel.

While some countries have historically avoided charging tolls for public roads, the trend now is to turn to tolls as a preferred means for financing highway infrastructure investments. Except for a few countries such as Japan and, to some extent Australia, the private sector is now playing a major role in toll road development. The United States, the world's bastion of progress, uses tolls that paying tolls have now become a habit for Americans, who do without even a whimper each time they use toll roads.

I've used the NLEX three times the last three weeks and I can assure you the men and women (including Marlene Ochoa) behind its rehabilitation are going great guns. May they continue the good work and give us soon a real toll road that can compare with the world's best.

* * *

Here's an update from Arnel Doria, Honda's indefatigable executive, on the other "side" of Honda. Honda, as you know, is not only into making best-selling cars and motorcycles. It is into other quality inventions. Here's Arnel Doria on Honda's other endeavor:

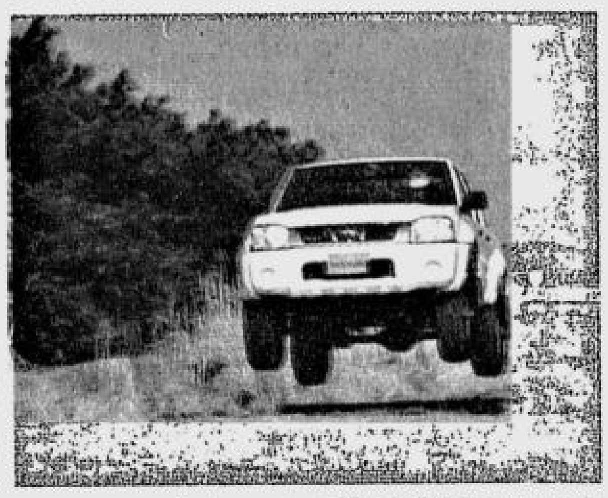
"Nikkei has reported that Honda's Home Energy Station (HES) is designed to simultaneously supply energy, both to households and automobiles, and can be easily installed.

"The keyword linking both houses and autos is hydrogen.

"Requiring an installation space of about 4 square meters, the 1-meter-tall HES produces

NLEX, C2

THE NISSAN FRONTIER: THE ANATOMY OF SAFETY



What makes a pickup safe and durable?

Is it merely the multitude of air bags embedded into its body? Is it the stability of its hard shell? Or is it the hidden power at its core? Surely vehicles will have to offer more than these for anyone to consider it a vehicle safe enough to trust it with the most precious cargo, their lives and that of their families!

With 70 years of ingenious creativity, development and innovation resulting in robust machines that transport both men and cargo under its belt, Nissan has perfected its craft of producing reliable and high-performance light commercial and recreational vehicles subjected to extreme conditions. A perfect example of which is Nissan's best-selling compact pickup in the market --- the Nissan Frontier.

Since its inception, the Frontier was designed by Japanese engineers with endurance, strength, durability, reliability and power as prerequisites. Each step towards achieving perfection was motivated by one thing in mind --- a complete commitment to producing a pickup truck that exceeds buyers expectations. By identifying and addressing each possible real time road and driving condition, Nissan has produced a superior breed of Nissan Frontiers that answer to each pickup driver's needs and wants.

The Frontier was also built to conform and tame any road condition there is --- dry, rocky, sloped. To guarantee this, the pickup was given a unique battery of tests that simulate various road conditions that test and prove its superior performance, suspension, body, and frame. Units are further submitted to cornering tests to validate its excellent maneuverability. As if to add more to the fun grueling tests, the Frontier is driven through rubble, hills, gravel, red clay, mud and sand to check its four-wheel drive capability.

Aside from undergoing Nissan's inimitable quality monitoring system, various key points are reinforced with steel plates. The Frontier is also built with the Nissan Zone Body Concept or crushable zone that absorbs force absorbed upon impact. Side-impact beams, driver side airbag and three-point seatbelts are also mainstay safety features that protect passengers in the event of a collision.

These tests and additional reinforcements on Nissan's best selling compact pickup guarantees safety, superb performance, long service life and minimum maintenance costs. It also assures that the vehicle is able to withstand tough weather conditions from -40 degrees to +150 degrees Centigrade and is capable of conquering sand dunes at a 25 degree slope or mountains at an altitude of 5000 meters. Should you even decide to play rough, you know you've got the gear to survive through it.

So what makes a safe vehicle safe and durable? Its not just physical implements and glowing add-ons --- it's the commitment to meet and surpass the Clients' needs. No wonder the Nissan Frontier is THE ultimate and only choice its owners swear by. The Nissan Frontier is the #1 best-selling pickup truck in the country 4 years in a row.

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THURSDAY, APRIL 22, 2004
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

Pinoy food the way Mom cooks it /E1

LIFESTYLE

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MONDAY **ARTS** ◉ TUESDAY **FITNESS** ◉ WEDNESDAY **2BU** ◉ THURSDAY **FOOD** ◉ FRIDAY **HOME & FASHION** ◉ SUNDAY **SURPRISES**

Authentic Cantonese siopao and sinful choco cake

I'VE BEEN doing Kitchen Rescue for some time now and there are at least two popular text requests. Since I try to give you nothing but the finest recipes, I have asked one of my personal favorites, chef Henry Cheung of The Good Earth Restaurant, for his authentic Cantonese, also known as Hong Kong-style, Cha Siopao recipe.

If you haven't tasted Henry's food, I swear you're missing half of your life!

KITCHEN RESCUE

Reggie Aspiras

Another recipe is an all-time favorite of mine, an old-fashioned chocolate cake with a sinfully delicious caramel sauce.

Bon Appetit!

Cha Siopao (Cantonese Style Roast Pork Asado Siopao)

1 ½ c high gluten, high protein, first class or bread flour

1 ½ c low gluten, cake flour or third-class flour (use cake flour for whiter dough)

6 g active dry yeast

¾ tsp baking powder

4 tsp ammonia bicarbonate (to smoothen dough)

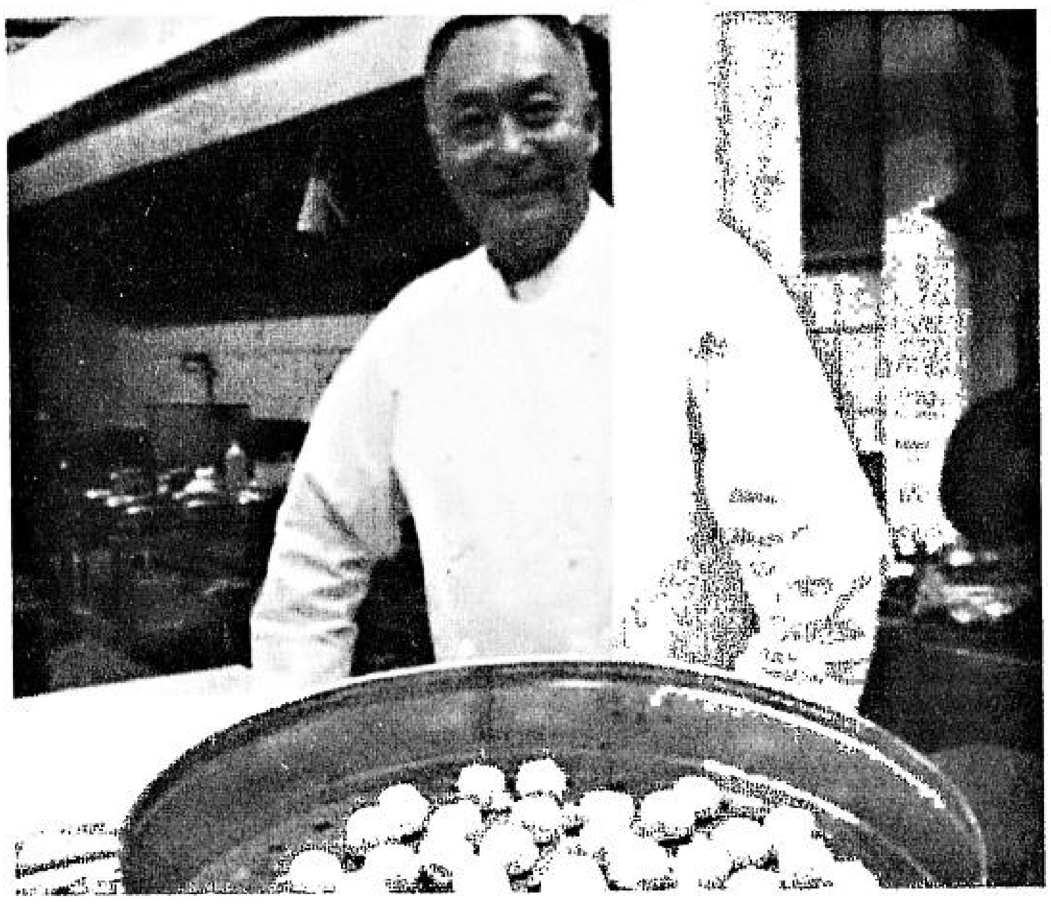
1 c warm water

Combine yeast, ammonia and warm water. Mix flours and make a well. Pour yeast mixture in the center of the well and slowly incorporate mixture. Once the mixture is solid enough to handle, knead until smooth.

Grease bowl and put the dough, cover with cling wrap. Let it rise until the dough has doubled in size. Remove dough from bowl, put on a flat surface and sprinkle with all-purpose flour on top.

Mix baking powder with dough and knead until smooth. Roll dough to 2-inch round and 12-inch long baton/log. Set dough aside.

AUTHENTIC/ D2



CHEF Henry Cheung of The Good Earth Restaurant shares his siopao recipe.

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THE ESSENTIAL BAKING & PASTRY SERIES: Classes begin on April 19 - July 20, 2004.
THE ESSENTIAL COOKING SERIES: Classes begin on April 21 - June 3, 2004.

SCHEDULE OF CLASSES

May 3 (Monday) 10:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. (classroom A) SPECIAL FLOWER ARRANGEMENT by: Glenn Remorca, floral designer. P3,000

May 4 (Tuesday) 9:00 a.m. - 12:00 noon (classroom A) COOKIE BARS FOR SELLING by: Chef Jane Paredes, food consultant, co-owner of Simply Desserts, trained at the Culinary Institute of America, Hyde Park, New York and Peter Kump's New York Cooking School. P1,500

May 4 (Tuesday) 1:00 - 4:00 p.m. (classroom A) COFFEE! COFFEE! COFFEE! by: Chef Aileen Anastacio, owner of Goodies N' Sweet Bakeshop & C'est Si Bon, Dean's List graduate of Culinary at the California Culinary Academy. P1,500

May 5 (Wednesday) 10:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. (classroom A) HOMEMADE SAUSAGES, CONDIMENTS & MARINADE WORKSHOP by: Chef Jane Paredes. P2,500

May 6 (Thursday) 10:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. (classroom A) CATERING DISHES by: Chef Jane Paredes. P1,700

May 7 (Friday) 10:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. (classroom A) DOUGHNUT WORKSHOP by: Chef Jane Paredes. P2,500

May 8 (Saturday) 1:00 - 5:00 p.m. (classroom A) KOREAN COOKING I by: Chef Young Hee Kim Park, owner of Silla Korean Restaurant & food consultant to various Korean restaurants in Metro Manila. P1,700

May 8 (Saturday) 10:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. (classroom B) PIZZA CLASS WORKSHOP by: Chef Giorgio Bucciarelli, Master Pizzaiolo & Barista, Food Consultant of various Italian restaurant all over Metro Manila, graduated at Culinary Institute, Milan, Italy. P2,500

May 12 (Wednesday) 1:00 - 4:00 p.m. (classroom A) SUSHI CLASS by: Chef Koichi Kondo, licensed cook from Ehime, Japan and food consultant to various Japanese restaurants. P1,700

May 13 (Thursday) 9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. (classroom A) BAKING FOR BEGINNERS by: Chef Jill Sandique, Food Consultant & Food Stylist, Blue Ribbon graduate of Peter Kump's New York Cooking School. P1,500

May 14 (Friday) 9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. (classroom A) New Class TURNING PASSION FOR FOOD INTO PROFIT (Basic Costing, Pricing, Revenue Setting for your Food Business) by: Chef Gianella Rodriguez, General Manager of Foodparks by Raintree. Graduate of Cornell University and Culinary Institute of America. P2,000

May 15 (Saturday) 11:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. (classroom A) New Class FROM THE FOREST TO THE TABLE Mushroom Specialties Selection) by: Chef David Pardo de Ayala, Chef of Aqua Restaurant and Soleil Café Moderne at Greenbelt 2. Graduate of Culinary Institute of America, New York P2,000

MAY 15 (Saturday) 9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m. (classroom B) New Class COOKIE WORKSHOP by: Chef Jill Sandique. P2,500

May 17 (Monday) 9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m. (classroom A) CHILDREN'S BAKING II by: Chef Jill Sandique. P1,500

May 18 (Tuesday) 10:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. (classroom A) OYSTER, MUSSELS and SHRIMP CLASS by: Chef Jane Paredes. P2,000

May 19 (Wednesday) 9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m. (classroom A) TEMPTING CHOCOLATE DESSERTS I by: Chef Jill Sandique. P1,500

May 20 (Thursday) 9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. (classroom A) POPULAR CHINESE DISHES FOR CATERING 2 by: Chef Katherine Sion, restaurateur (Ding Hao & Fat Kat), food consultant to caterer & an expert in Chinese Cuisine. P1,700

May 21 (Friday) 10:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. (classroom A) FRESH PASTA by: Chef Giorgio Bucciarelli. P2,500

May 22 (Saturday) 9:00 a.m. - 1:30 p.m. (classroom A) BASIC CAKES & ICINGS FOR BEGINNERS by: Heny Sison. P1,500

May 22 (Saturday) 2:00 - 5:30 p.m. BROWNIES & BARS by: Heny Sison. P1,500

May 22 (Saturday) 10:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. (classroom B) New Class BASIC HOME COOKING FOR BEGINNERS by: Chef Jane Paredes. P2.000

May 24 - 28 (Monday - Friday) 9:00 a.m. - 12:00 noon (classroom A) GUM PASTE FLOWER MAKING by: Heny Sison. P5,000

May 24 - 28 (Monday - Friday) 1:00 - 4:00 p.m. (classroom A) ADVANCED CAKE DECORATION by: Heny Sison. P10,000

May 29 (Saturday) 9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m. (classroom A) New Class SWEET AND SAVORY TREATS by: Chef Jill Sandique. P1,500

May 29 (Saturday) 10:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. (classroom B) New Class BASIC HOME COOKING FOR BEGINNERS II by: Chef Jane Paredes. P2,000

May 31 (Monday) 9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m. A WORKSHOP ON FAVORITE BREADS by: Chef Jill Sandique. P2,500

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THE OLD-FASHIONED [illegible]

Culinary workshops for kids and parents

THE MAYA Kitchen™ Culinary Arts Center will hold summer kitchen workshops to broaden children's culinary knowledge and skills, and give parents business ideas on food.

Parents will learn how to cook native delights such as Pichi-Pichi, Bibingkang Malagkit, Cassava Bibingka, Putong Puti, Kutsinta, Maya Bibingka and Puto Cake in the one-day Kakanin course on April 24 at 9 a.m.-4 p.m.

Also offered is a comprehensive class for adults: Baking I for beginners on May 4-7, 1:30-5 p.m.

The Young People's Cook-In on April 22-24, 9 a.m.-1 p.m. will teach teenagers hygiene, sanitation and safety. They will also learn to cook Onion Rings, Spicy Buffalo Wings, Mongolian Seafood and Vegetable Fusion, Baked Rolled Lasagna, Coffee Floats, Jamaican-style Turnovers, Cheesesticks Pica Pica, Pita Pizzas, Mango Bars, Easy Apple Pie and Freezy Coolers.

Boys and girls aged 6-12 will enjoy the Junior Culinary Workshop on May 11-12, 8:30 a.m. -12 nn. Students will be given free "Kidstuff" cookbooks. The participants will learn such recipes as Chuckling Chicken, Fish in Straw and Hay, Screamball Scramble, Breakfast Treat, Soft Pretzels, Mini-Pizza Bites, Lemon Jumbles, Chocolate Crispy Chips and Fruit Crumbles.

The Maya Kitchen is at the 8/F of the Liberty Building, A Arnaiz Avenue (Pasay Road), Makati City. Call 8921185 or 8925011 local 108. E-mail mayakitchen@pacific.net.ph.

Authentic Cantonese siopao

From page D1

High and low gluten flour is available at bakery supply stores or in Jubilee Trading in Farmers Market and in Chocolate Lover's. (Please check the yellow pages for their respective telephone numbers and addresses.)

Cha Siu filling:
(roast pork filling, good for 900 g of dough)
400 g Chinese roast pork, diced (available in Chinese restaurants)

Sauce for filling:
¾ c low gluten flour
1/3 c scallion, chopped
1/3 c ginger root, pounded
3 tbsp salad oil
A.
1 c water
3 tbsp sugar
2/3 tsp chicken powder
½ tsp red vinegar
B.
1 tbsp oyster sauce
1 tbsp Chinese soy sauce
1 tsp sesame oil
2/3 tbsp salad oil
white bond paper cut to size

Sift the flour, set aside. Pour in salad oil in pan and add scallions and ginger, sauté. Drain oil. In a bowl, combine flour, scallions and ginger. Put mixture A in a saucepan and bring it to a boil. Take the mixture off the fire and combine with flour mixture to form a paste. Combine roast pork and B together, mix well. Combine A and B. Divide the dough and filling into equal portions and wrap filling in dough. Line with bond paper. Steam over high heat for 15 minutes.

Old-fashioned Chocolate Cake

1 ¼ c butter
1 ¾ c sugar
5 eggs
1 tsp pure vanilla extract
2 ¼ c sifted cake flour
½ c dark baker's cocoa powder
1 ¼ tsp baking soda
¾ tsp salt
½ c sour cream
½ c milk
¼ c ice water
Strawberries for garnish

Coat bundt pan with butter, flour and cocoa powder. In a mixer, cream the butter until light and fluffy. Mix in the sugar. One at a time, mix in the eggs, then the vanilla, occasionally scraping down the mixing bowl.

Meanwhile, in another bowl, sift together the flour, cocoa powder, baking soda, and ¾ tsp salt. Combine water, sour cream and milk.

Add 1/3 of the flour mixture. Then 1/3 of the cream, milk and water mixture. Repeat, mixing after each addition. Transfer the batter to the pan and bake, about 40-45 minutes. Frost cake with chocolate frosting. Serve with caramel sauce and garnish with strawberries.

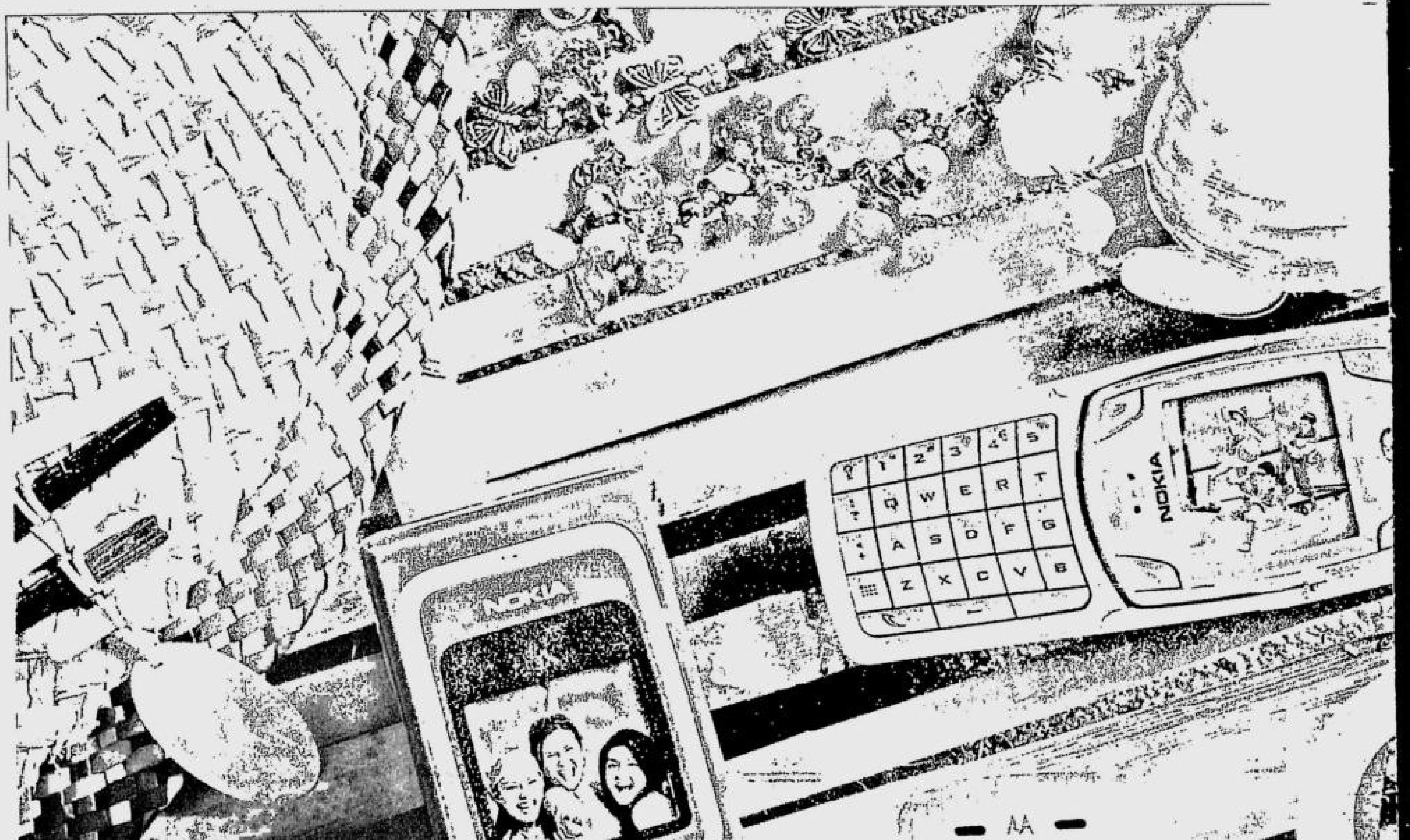
Chocolate frosting:
¾ c butter
¾ c sugar
¾ c cream
4 tsp instant coffee powder
10 oz bittersweet chocolate, chopped
1 tsp vanilla extract
2 ½ c powdered sugar
1 tsp ground cinnamon

Combine butter, ¾ c sugar, cream and coffee powder in large saucepan. Stir over medium heat until sugar and coffee powder dissolve and mixture simmers. Remove from heat. Add bittersweet chocolate. Whisk until smooth. Whisk in vanillas. Pour chocolate mixture into large bowl. Sift in powdered sugar and cinnamon; whisk to blend. Press plastic onto surface of frosting. Chill just until firm enough to spread, stirring occasionally, about 1 ½ hours.

Caramel sauce:
1 ¼ c sugar
1/3 c water
2/3 c heavy cream (if sauce is too thick add more cream to thin)

Pour the sugar into the center of a deep saucepan. Carefully pour the water around the walls of the pan, trying not to splash any sugar onto the walls. Do not stir; gently draw your finger twice through the center of the sugar, making a cross, to moisten it. Over high heat, bring to a full boil and cook without stirring, swirling the pan occasionally to even out the color, 5-10 minutes (until golden). Immediately turn off the heat and use a wooden spoon to slowly and carefully stir in the cream.

For questions, text at 0917-8399888.



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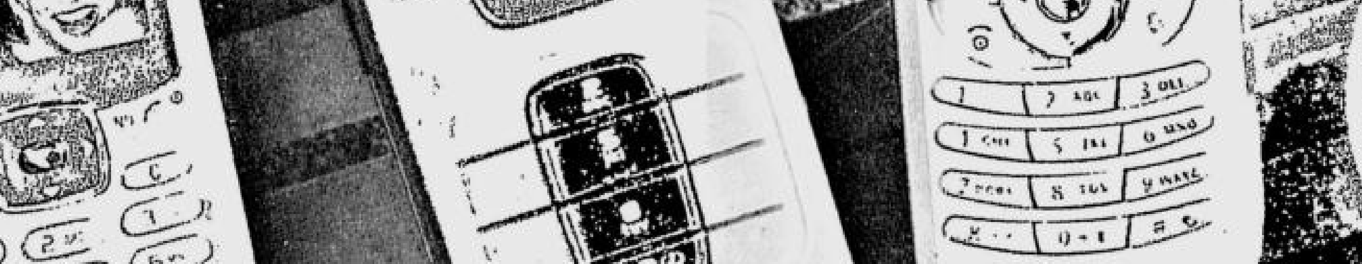

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Cool sweets for summer

BUCO Pandan Delight

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There's Choco Craze Parfait, three alternating scoops of Nestlé chocolate and vanilla ice cream with chocolate syrup and caramel swirls topped with choco-coated wafers.

Buco Pandan Delight has two scoops of vanilla ice cream with flavorful *buko pandan* gelatin cubes, topped with *macapuno* strips and *pinipig*.

The Halo-halo Jubilee is an assortment of Fiesta Fruits in shaved ice and milk with ice cream. A smaller but no less delectable version is called the Halo-halo Surprise.

Halo-halo surprise

Sweet camote
Red mung beans
Kaong
White beans
Sweet banana
Sweet *langka*; cut into two-inch long strips
Sweet *ube*
Gulaman, red strawberry
Shaved ice
Carnation evap milk
Leche flan
Optional—ice cream, one scoop

Using a mini-goblet, arrange the first seven ingredients as listed above. Level *ube* in scooper with spatula and serve half. Add cut-up *gulaman* and shaved ice, then pour the milk. Add ice cream and top with *leche flan*.

HALO-HALO Surprise

CHOCO Craze Parfait

New cocktails

GREAT Excapes Cocktail

SIDEBAR has launched its new cocktails laced with Pepsi X. Concocted with popular liquor bases, rum, vodka and even *lambanog*, the Great Escapes Cocktails include Kamikaze Thrill, Wallbanger's Hike, Screwdriver's Trek, and Rhum X.

The new cocktails cost only P50 each. Drinkers can participate in the Great Escapes Adventure Series, a raffle that will bring lucky guests to El Nido, Palawan.

Visit Sidebar Malate at 1771 Adriatico St (tel. 5255337) and Sidebar Ortigas at El Pueblo Real de Manila, ADB Avenue and J. Vargas, Ortigas Center (tel. 6317339).

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G Flex 1,800	P 1,800	300	P 5.00	P 6.00
G Flex 2,500	P 2,500	350	P 4.50	P 5.50
G Flex 3,500	P 3,500	400	P 4.00	P 4.50
G Flex 5,000	P 5,000	400	P 4.00	P 4.50
G Flex 7,000	P 7,000	600	P 4.00	P 4.50
G Flex 10,000	P 10,000	900	P 4.00	P 4.50

Roaming charges are chargeable to the consumable amount

	MSF	Free Text	Free Mins	GHP-GHP	GHP-non-GHP
G Text	P 500	500	20	P 6.00	P 7.50
G Mix	P 800	350	100	P 5.50	P 7.00
G Talk	P 1,200	350	210	P 5.00	P 6.50
G Talk Plus	P 1,800	450	350	P 4.50	P 6.00
G Match	P 2,500	550	500	P 4.00	P 5.50
G Max	P 3,500	650	750	P 3.50	P 4.50
Platinum	P 5,000	650	1,100	P 3.50	P 4.50
Platinum	P 7,000	800	1,300	P 3.50	P 4.50
Platinum	P 10,000	1,200	1,800	P 3.50	P 4.50

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May 31, 2004.

Permit No. 0829, Series of 2004

making great things possible this summer Globe HANDYPHONE

Can't stand the heat? Stay out of kitchen

By Dorothy MJ Ferreria
Contributor

WITH the heat we are experiencing these days, who would want to spend time sweating in a hot kitchen? What I do when the heat becomes unbearable is to marinade overnight a chicken in the refrigerator, pop it into the turbo broiler the next day and wait exactly 45 minutes for a perfect roast.

Here we have different marinades you might want to try for a quick and hassle-free meal. Let your turbo broiler do the work for you.

Roast Chicken with Citrus Glaze

1 whole chicken, approximately 1.2 kg, cut in half vertically

Marinade:

¼ c olive oil or melted butter
Juice of 1 American lemon (about 3 tbsp)
Grated rind of 1 American lemon
Juice of ½ of a fresh orange (about 2 tbsp)
Salt and pepper to taste

Citrus glaze:

¼ c orange marmalade
1 tbsp soy sauce
Juice of 1 American lemon
1 tbsp butter

Combine the ingredients for the marinade in a large stainless or glass bowl. Add the chicken and let stand for at least an hour, basting the chicken with the marinade from time to time. Cover the bowl with plastic wrap and chill overnight. Thaw out for 30 minutes before roasting.

Place a wire rack in the center of a turbo broiler bowl. Arrange the chicken in the wire rack, skin side down. Set the turbo broiler at 350° F.

Bake the chicken for 15 minutes. Invert the chicken, skin side up, and bake for another 15 minutes.

After a total of 30 minutes, baste the chicken with the glaze and continue to cook for about 15 minutes more, basting the chicken with the glaze every five minutes.

Pierce the chicken thigh with a fork to test for doneness. If the liquid that oozes out of the chicken is clear, then it is done. If the liquid is pinkish in color, continue to cook for another 5 to 10 minutes until the chicken is done.

To prepare the glaze, combine the ingredients in a small saucepan. Allow to boil for five minutes or until somewhat syrupy. Excess glaze may be used as a dipping sauce.

If desired, use a conventional gas/electric oven preheated at 350° F. Approximate baking time would be an hour and 30 minutes.

Roast Chicken with Double O Stuffing (aka orange and onion stuffing)

1 whole chicken (at least 1.2 kilos)
1 tsp dried rosemary leaves
1 tbsp minced garlic
2 tsp prepared mustard
¼ c soy sauce
½ orange, sliced
½ onion, sliced
2 pcs screwpine leaves (*pandan*)

Sauce:

¼ c orange marmalade
2 tbsp soy sauce
¼ c freshly squeezed orange juice
2 tbsp white sugar
1 tsp dark rum
Grated rind of 1 orange

Combine rosemary leaves, garlic and mustard powder in a bowl. Rub the mixture inside the cavity of the chicken as well as all over the skin. Transfer the chicken to a bowl. Pour the soy sauce over the chicken and let stand for an hour. Cover the bowl with plastic wrap and refrigerate overnight.

Thaw out for 30 minutes before roasting. Stuff the chicken with orange slices, onions and *pandan* leaves.

Roast in a turbo broiler set at 350° F for 45 minutes, inverting the chicken midway to even out the color. Baste the chicken with the drippings during the last 10 minutes of baking for an attractive color.

To prepare the sauce, combine the ingredients in a saucepan. Place the mixture over medium heat and allow to boil, stirring constantly until it becomes somewhat syrupy.

Bistro-style Roast Chicken

1 whole chicken (at least 1.2 kilos)

Marinade:

1 tbsp well-pounded garlic
1 tbsp soy sauce
1 tbsp Worcestershire sauce
2 tbsp cherry brandy
¼ c olive oil or melted butter
Rock salt and pepper to taste
1 tbsp dried rosemary leaves

Stuffing:

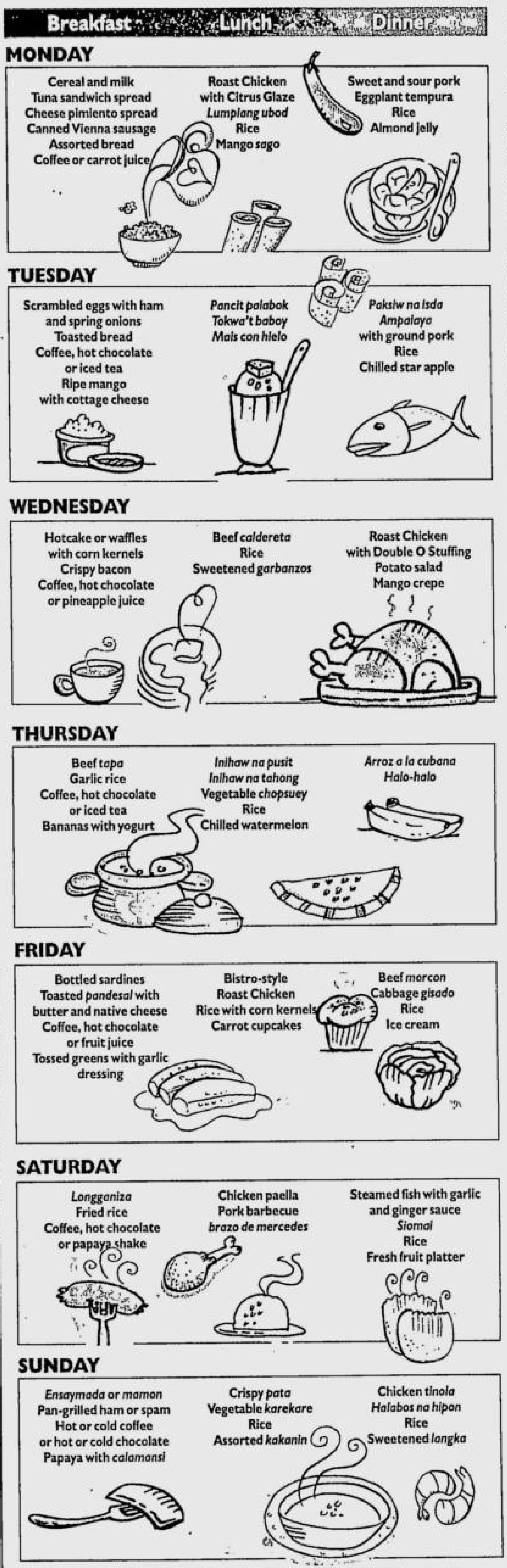
1 onion sliced
1 carrot, peeled and sliced
1 celery stalk, coarsely chopped

Combine the ingredients for the marinade in a bowl. Rub the chicken with the mixture and let stand for an hour at room temperature. Cover the bowl with plastic wrap and chill overnight. Thaw out the chicken for 30 minutes before roasting. Stuff the cavity of the chicken with onion, carrot and celery.

Roast in a turbo broiler set at 350° F for 45 minutes, turning midway for an even color.

Note: Bottled dried rosemary leaves are available in the spice sections of large groceries. A whole bay leaf, also known as laurel, may be used as a substitute.

Dorothy MJ Ferreria offers cooking, baking and cake-decorating classes at Dorothy's Cooking School in Quezon City, Julius Maggi Kitchen in Makati and in key provincial cities. For classes in Manila, call 7217735 or e-mail dorothy-ferreria@skyinet.net For classes in Bacolod this month contact (034) 4340445.



	Breakfast	Lunch	Dinner
MONDAY	Cereal and milk Tuna sandwich spread Cheese pimiento spread Canned Vienna sausage Assorted bread Coffee or carrot juice	Roast Chicken with Citrus Glaze *Lumpiang ubod* Rice Mango *sago*	Sweet and sour pork Eggplant tempura Rice Almond jelly
TUESDAY	Scrambled eggs with ham and spring onions Toasted bread Coffee, hot chocolate or iced tea Ripe mango with cottage cheese	*Pancit palabok* *Tokwa't baboy* *Mais con hielo*	*Paksiw na isda* *Ampalaya* with ground pork Rice Chilled star apple
WEDNESDAY	Hotcake or waffles with corn kernels Crispy bacon Coffee, hot chocolate or pineapple juice	Beef *caldereta* Rice Sweetened *garbanzos*	Roast Chicken with Double O Stuffing Potato salad Mango crepe
THURSDAY	Beef *tapa* Garlic rice Coffee, hot chocolate or iced tea Bananas with yogurt	*Inihaw na pusit* *Inihaw na tahong* Vegetable *chopsuey* Rice Chilled watermelon	*Arroz a la cubana* *Halo-halo*
FRIDAY	Bottled sardines Toasted *pandesal* with butter and native cheese Coffee, hot chocolate or fruit juice Tossed greens with garlic dressing	Bistro-style Roast Chicken Rice with corn kernels Carrot cupcakes	Beef *morcon* Cabbage *gisado* Rice Ice cream
SATURDAY	*Longganiza* Fried rice Coffee, hot chocolate or papaya shake	Chicken paella Pork barbecue *brazo de mercedes*	Steamed fish with garlic and ginger sauce *Siomai* Rice Fresh fruit platter
SUNDAY	*Ensaymada* or *mamon* Pan-grilled ham or spam Hot or cold coffee or hot or cold chocolate Papaya with *calamansi*	Crispy *pata* Vegetable *karekare* Rice Assorted *kakanin*	Chicken *tinola* *Halabos na hipon* Rice Sweetened *langka*

Little chefs in the making

SUMMER fun awaits kids right in the kitchen with San Miguel Purefoods Culinary Center's Kids Kitchen Camp.

This enjoyable gastronomic camp is open to all youngsters aged 8 to 13 years old who are interested to learn cooking and baking while having fun and meeting new friends.

Sessions will be held on May 4, 5, 7, 11, 12 and 14, from 1-4 p.m. at San Miguel Pure Foods Culinary Center, Legazpi cor. Eagle Sts., Barrio Ugong, Pasig City.

Limited slots available. Fee is P1,200 for the entire course. Call 6719876 locals 2771, 402, 404 and 405.

Strike gold in your favorite resto

GET a Bistro Gold Card and enjoy great discounts all year round when you dine in your favorite T.G.I. Friday's, Italianni's or Outback Restaurant branch.

The card entitles you to a 20-percent discount on food and beverage every time you dine at any Bistro Group restaurant.

Visit T.G.I. Friday's, Italianni's and Outback Restaurant from April to June. After six visits and a minimum purchase of P250 per visit with an order of Coke, you automatically get the card!

T.G.I. Friday's have branches at Glorietta 3, Robinsons Place Manila, Hotel Rembrandt in Quezon City, Alabang Town Center and The Brickroad in Sta. Lucia East.

Italianni's is at Greenbelt 2, Glorietta IV, Alabang Town Center and SM City Bicutan while Outback has branches at Glorietta IV, Libis and Alabang Town Center.

Beat the heat with cool drinks

BURGOO American Bar and Restaurant offers refreshing smoothies and coolers for this hot season.

They include Orange Juice, Pineapple Juice, Dalandan Juice or Shake, Watermelon Shake, Ripe and Green Mango Shake, Strawberry Cooler, Kiwi Cooler, Cookies and Cream, Rocky Road, and Marshmallow Foam, among others.

Get them at all Burgoo outlets located at 310 Tomas Morato Ext. South Triangle, Diliman, QC; The Podium, Ortigas Center, Mandaluyong City; Rockwell Center, Makati City. Call 9277424, 8981815 or 6875254.

Dalandan Juice or Shake

2½ oz fresh *dalandan* extract
1 oz simple syrup
1 scoop crushed ice

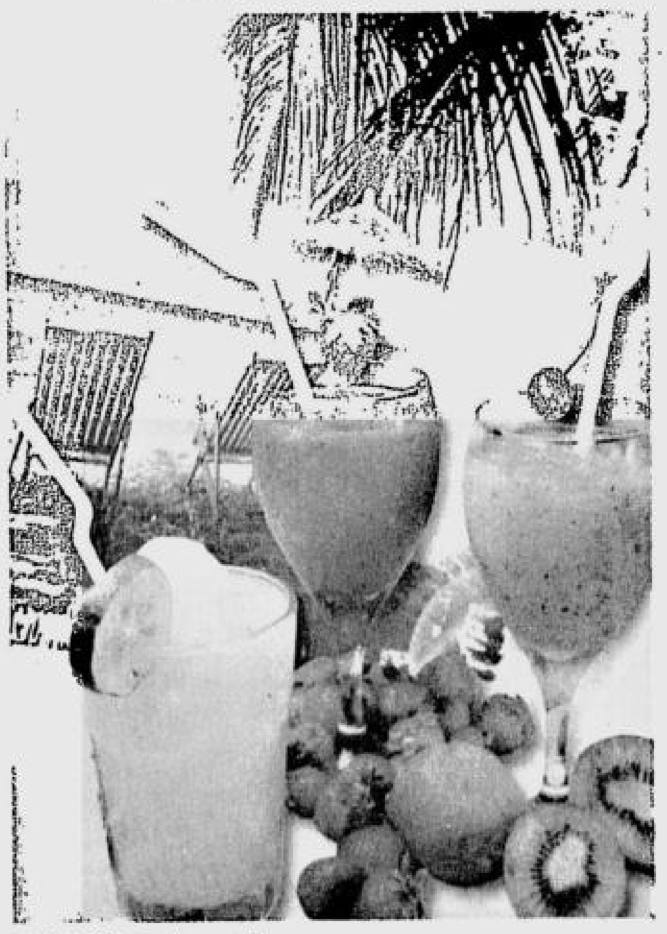
Strawberry Cooler

5 pcs fresh strawberry or 2½ oz strawberry puree
½ oz simple syrup
1 scoop crushed ice

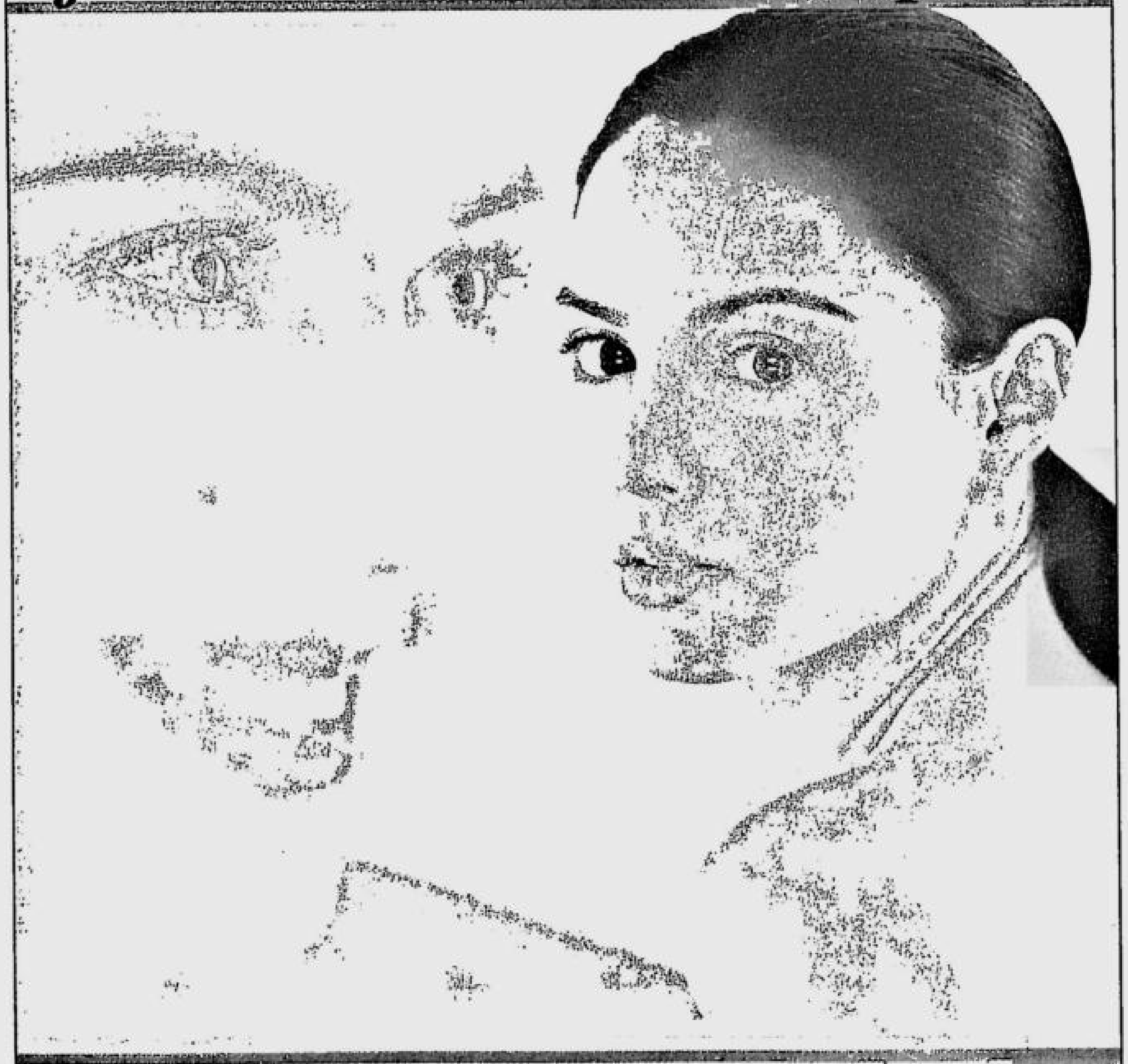
Kiwi Cooler

1 pc peeled kiwi
1½ oz simple syrup
1 scoop crushed ice

For each recipe, just combine all ingredients in a blender, and serve.



SUMMER Coolers at Burgoo



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LIFESTYLE

LUMPIANG Ubod

Pinoy food the way Mom cooks it

Masas doesn't experiment but serves what is authentic

Text by Rowena C. Burgos
Photos by Roger Carpio

FILIPINO food may seem simple. But some of the country's major restaurant chains have subjected Mom's simple recipes to lengthy research and development plus extensive market testing, that they sometimes no longer look familiar.

Not at Masas. At the restaurant, Pinoy meals are prepared the way they are supposed to be.

"Filipino comfort food for us is one that's very recognizable to guests. They're not intimidated by it, and they feel very comfortable ordering it," says Alan Mathay, chef and co-owner of Masas.

"We don't substitute ingredients here. No shortcuts, no pressure cookers, no MSG (*vetsin*). We try to be faithful to the dishes Filipinos have come to love (the way) Grandma cooked them for you," Mathay says.

Sinigang broth, for instance, is cooked with onions, pepper and salt. Instead of adding salt to boiling water, Boneless Crispy Pata is spiced up with onions, carrots, celery and pepper.

The basics are what Mathay and his friend and business partner, Chris Escudero, try to do best. And both swear that Masas is faithful to traditional Filipino recipes, which they got from their parents and friends who love to cook.

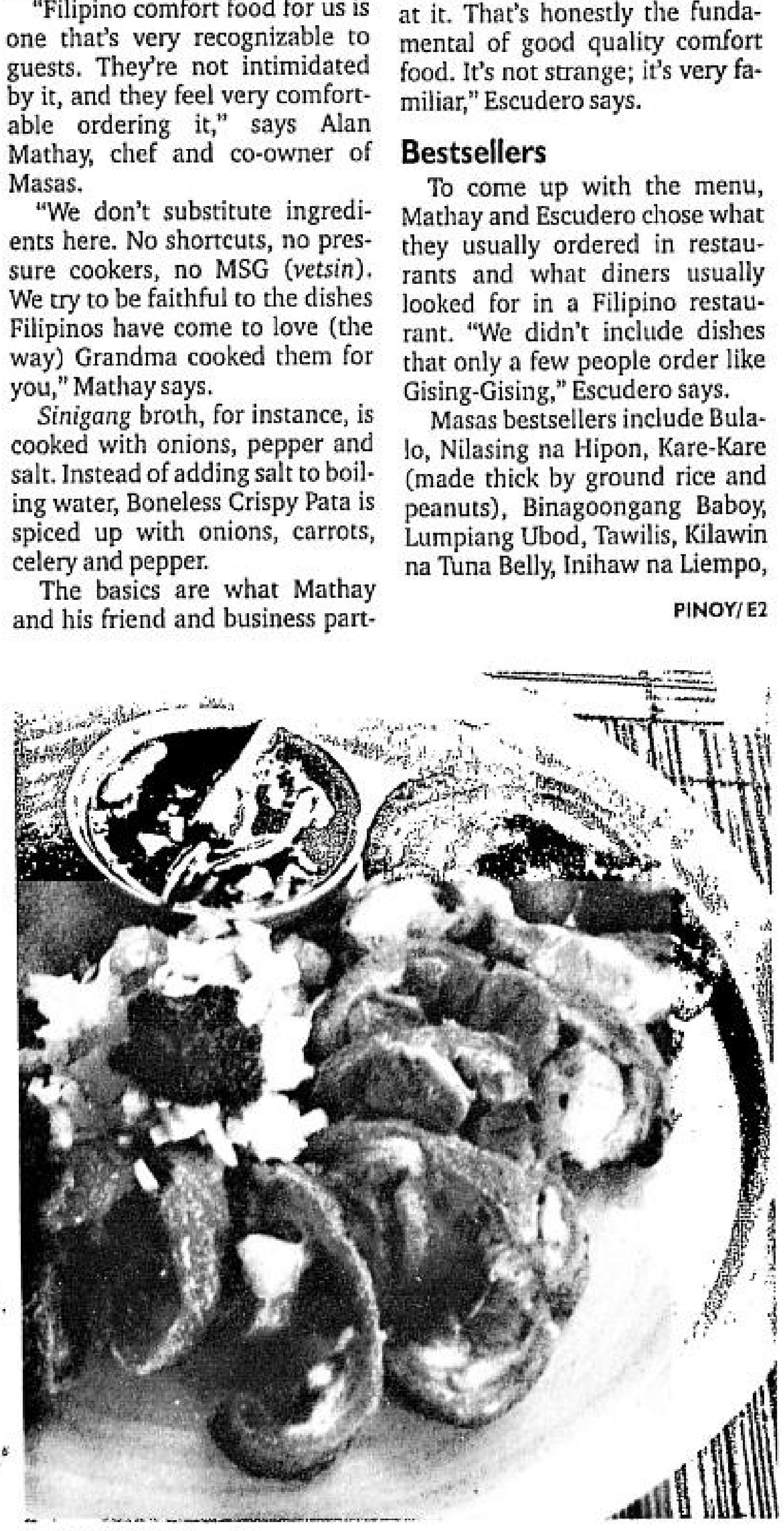
"I think this is a good example of how you can do something that is so familiar to people and excel at it. That's honestly the fundamental of good quality comfort food. It's not strange; it's very familiar," Escudero says.

Bestsellers

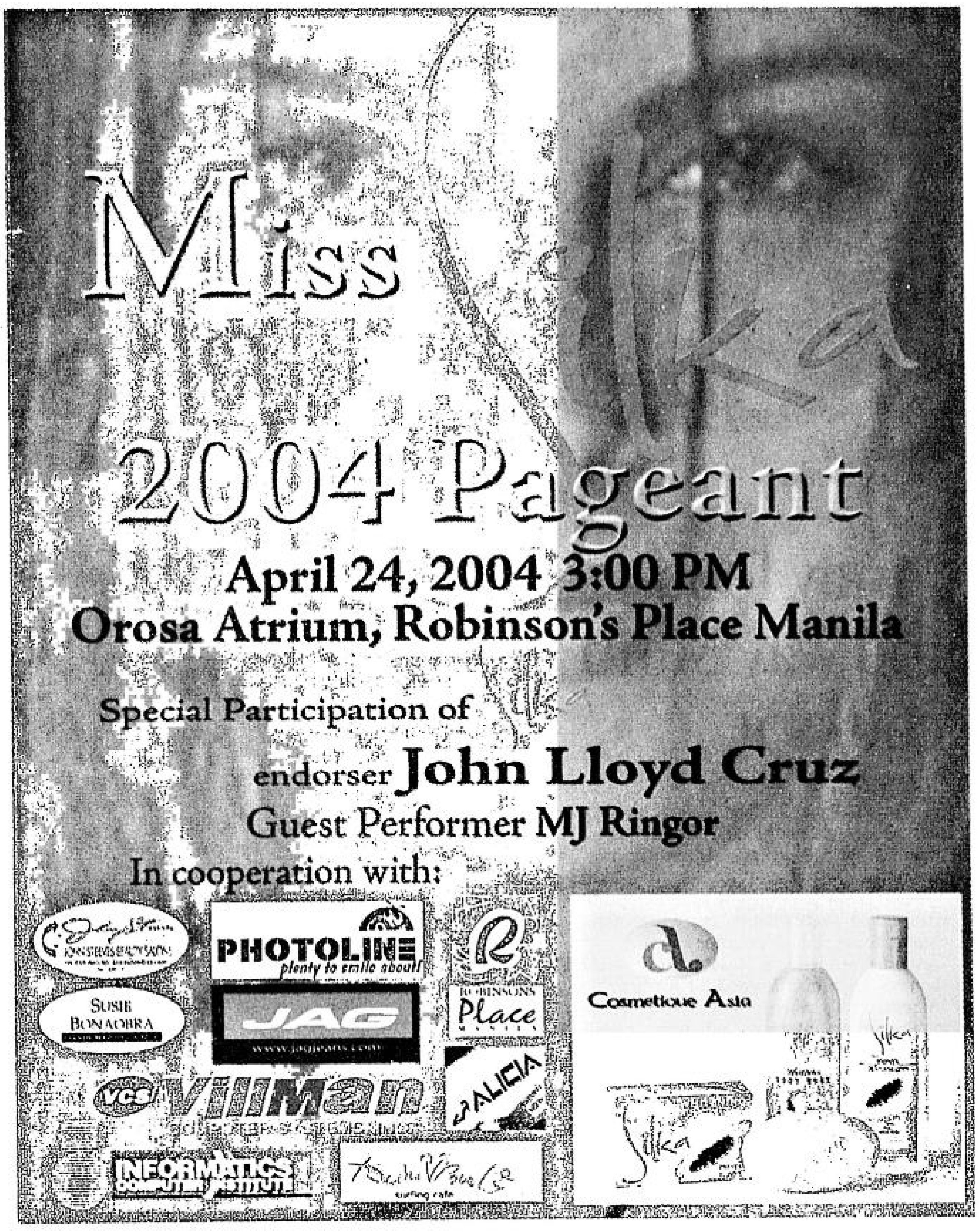
To come up with the menu, Mathay and Escudero chose what they usually ordered in restaurants and what diners usually looked for in a Filipino restaurant. "We didn't include dishes that only a few people order like Gising-Gising," Escudero says.

Masas bestsellers include Bulalo, Nilasing na Hipon, Kare-Kare (made thick by ground rice and peanuts), Binagoongang Baboy, Lumpiang Ubod, Tawilis, Kilawin na Tuna Belly, Inihaw na Liempo,

PINOY/ E2



BONELESS Crispy Pata



Miss Silka
2004 Pageant
April 24, 2004 3:00 PM
Orosa Atrium, Robinson's Place Manila
Special Participation of
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Rustan's Makati:
April 22-25, 2004
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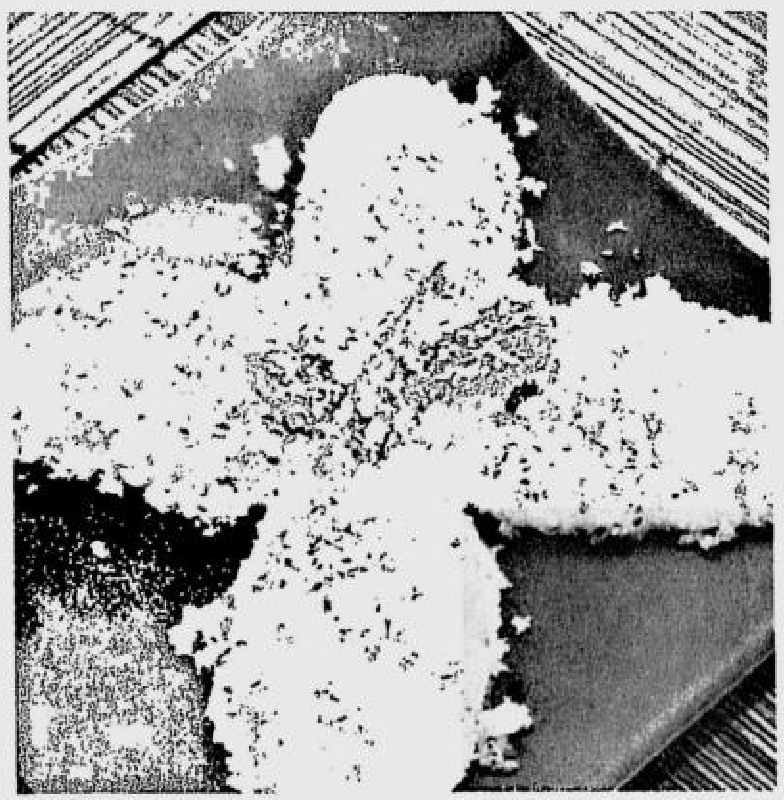
SINIGANG na Baka

INIHAW na Tuna Belly



PALITAW

Pinoy food the way Mom cooks it

From page E1

Sinigang na Baka, Pinakbet, Laing, Bicol Express, Boneless Crispy Pata, Fried Lapu-Lapu, Inihaw na Pusit, Sinigang na Ulang (fresh water shrimps).

Binot, crispy pork belly wrapped in tortilla with *lechon* sauce, hoisin sauce and garlic cream cheese, tastes like *lechon kawali*.

Another attraction at Masas is the generous servings. Each dish is good for two persons and reasonably priced. "You can't make Filipino food very expensive, otherwise (people would) rather eat at home," Escudero says.

Sleek and modern

Located at Greenbelt 2, Ayala Center, Makati, Masas has the ambience of a sleek modern home with indigenous touches: green bamboo stick place mats, hanging rattan lamps, paintings of rural scenery.

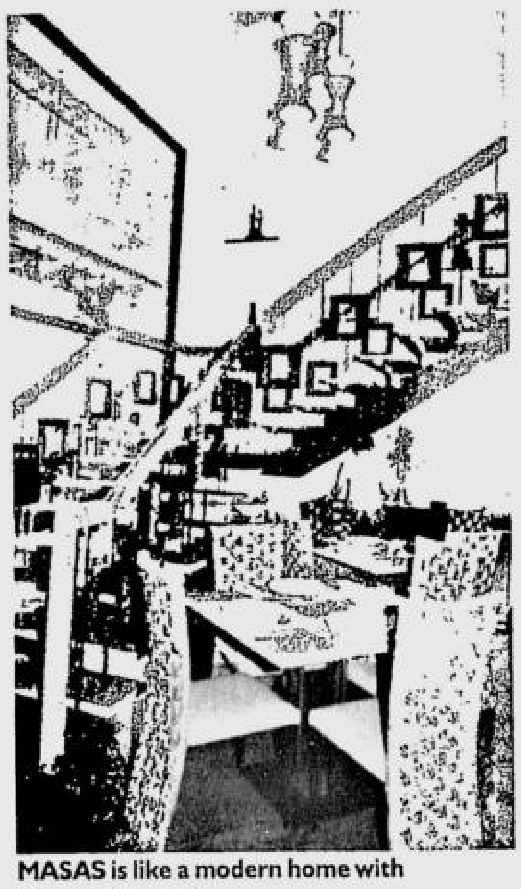
An ice cream cart and *bibingkahan* are on the drawing board.

Masas diners are also treated to relaxing music at 8-10 p.m. On Sundays, listen to the ballads of Arthur Manuntag; Tuesdays, Snare Mata's standards and classics; and Wednesdays, G Acoustic's mellow music.

On Mondays, the restaurant features Frank Sinatra songs; Thursdays and Saturdays, '70s music; and Fridays, current hits.

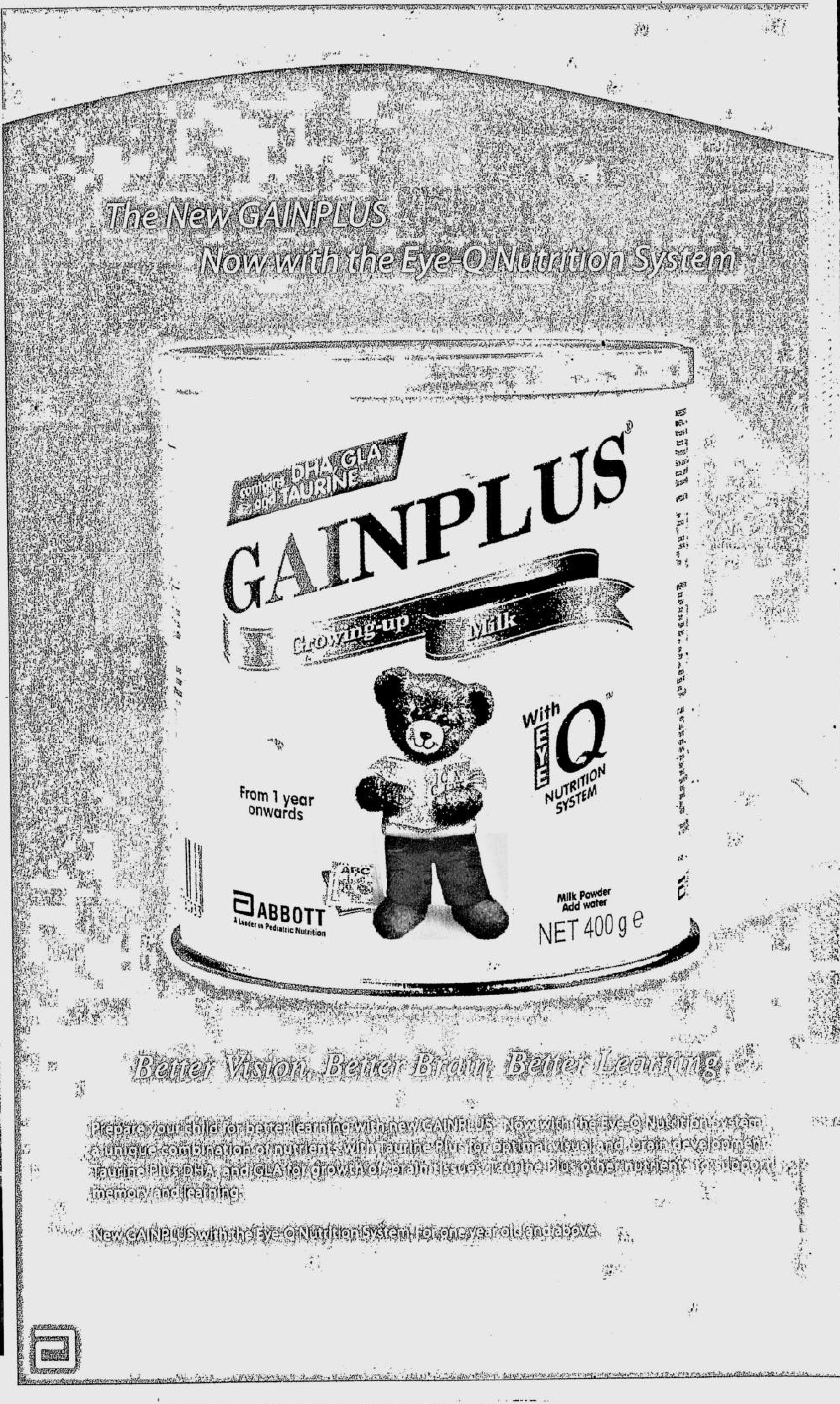
"At Masas, we try to emphasize our traditions as Filipinos. With food, we don't want to experiment. We just want to serve (what is) authentic," Escudero says.

E-mail the author at rburgos@inquirer.com.ph



MASAS is like a modern home with indigenous touches.

FRIENDS and business partners Chris Escudero and Alan Mathay



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International buffet every day

IF you can't decide what you want to eat you may want to visit Blue Bay Buffet by the Bay. With a choice of more than 55 food items daily, you are likely to find exactly what you want.

Located at the old Army and Navy Complex at the Rizal Park beside Manila Bay, the restaurant offers a generous buffet spread of Filipino, Chinese, Japanese, Spanish, Italian and other dishes.

Food and beverage manager Corona Matias says Blue Bay is the only buffet restaurant in the Rizal Park area offering something for everybody. Themed festivals are also held every now and then.

For salads and appetizers, the daily buffet offers seaweeds and century eggs, salad greens, vegetable slices, *manggang hilaw* and *bagoong*, coleslaw, sashimi and sushi, as well as a selection of dim sum. The carving station serves *lechon* and Peking duck.

Aside from two or three choices of soup daily, diners can also have shabu-shabu. A pasta corner offers a variety of noodles and sauces.

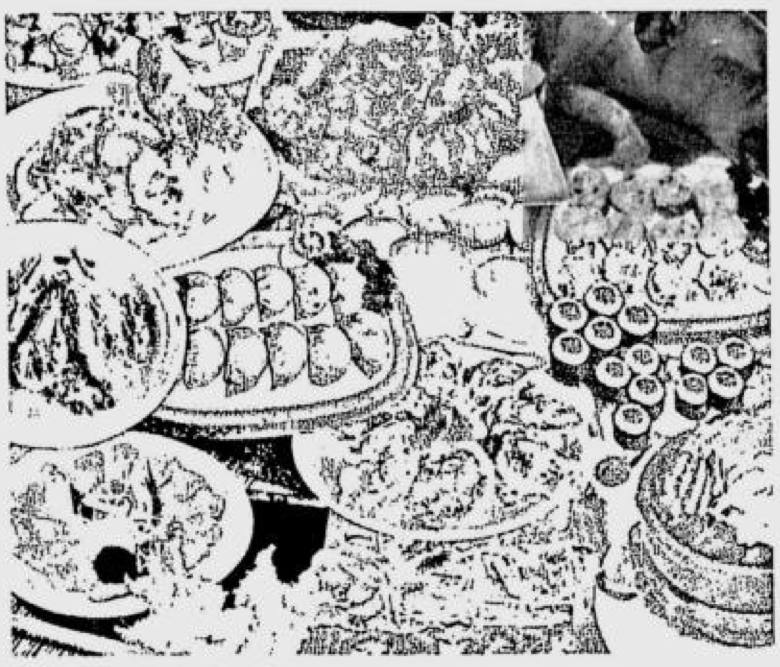
Filipino dishes include steamed clams, baked mussels, grilled squid, *adobong pusit*, Bicol Express, beef tapa, crispy crablets, *ginataang kuhol*, chicken-pork *adobo*, bistek Tagalog, *sisig* and *kare-kare*.

Desserts include both baked items and native *kakanin*. Diners can also make their own *halo-halo* .

Iced tea and lemonade are "bottomless," but fresh fruit juices are also available.

Blue Bay's buffet is available at the no-leftover price of P320 for adults and P160 for children nine years and younger.

Blue Bay Buffet by the Bay is at South Rd. (T. M. Kalaw Ave.) corner Parade St., Rizal Park, Ermita, Manila. Call 5250514, 0920-9093630 and telefax 4007439.



SUMPTUOUS buffet choices

Bake the perfect cheesecake

THE REGGIE Aspiras School of Culinary Arts has released the following schedule of classes up to the first week of May:

April 23 (Friday)—Cheesecakes 101: The aesthetically perfect Cheese Cake with Mixed Fruit/Berry Topping, White Chocolate and Strawberry Cheesecake, The Best Chocolate Truffle Cheesecake, My Favorite Ricotta and Lemon Cheesecake, Banana Cheesecake with Macadamia Caramel Sauce, Delicious Homemade Cheesecake Ice Cream

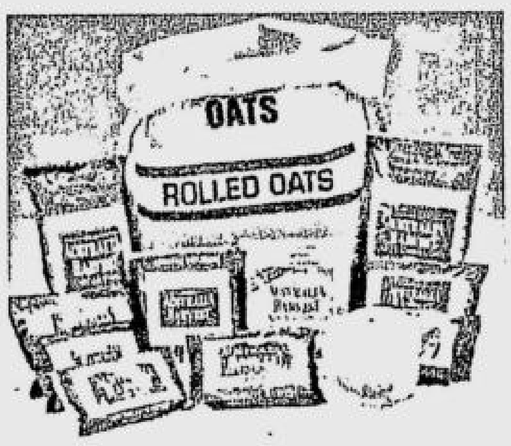
April 24 (Saturday)—Shellfish 101: Learn the basics of cooking shellfish-steaming, frying, stir- frying, baking, etc. Shellfish to be used are scallops, lobsters, crabs, prawns, lobster, clams, mussels, etc. from Asian to European dishes. Create your own seafood buffet (steamed and grilled) with sauces; soups to salads plus side dishes. Over 12 recipes. Easy to prepare and delicious.

April 26 (Monday)—The best cinnamon rolls ever (two versions of melt-in-your-mouth cinnamon roll dough). Classic and variations—Cream Cheese topping, Chocolate, Apple, Citrus, Poppy Seed, Sticky Buns

April 28 (Wednesday)—All-new Gourmet Filipino 2004: Lumpia Platter-Lechon and Duck Confit with Dipping Sauces and *Pako* Salad; Seabass with Puréed Tomato *Sinigang* and Asian Greens; French Duck and Pork Adobo with Coconut Risotto; Wasabi, Cream and Native Cherry Tomato Jam; Maja Blanca Panna Cotta with Pandan Corn and Orchid Truffle Oil

April 30 (Friday)—Delicious Asian-style Noodle Soups: Learn the tricks to making the perfect soup stock—Duck Noodle Soup, Beef Wanton Noodle Soup, Ban Pho Bo (Vietnamese noodle soup), Thai Scallop and Prawn Noodle Soup, Toyo and Five-Spice Fried Chicken with *Kamote*; and Berry Catsup Chinese Roast Chicken and Pork Noodle Soup.

Call 9289296, 9273008, 6335162, 6474744 or 0917-8399888.



GET the healthy taste of Australia with every serving of Ideal Australia Harvest Oats.

Oats that are rich in flavor and nutrition

WHEN one talks of Australian gastronomic delights, a specialty list of gourmet items that include barramundi fillets, kangaroo steak, sparkling wines and lamb cuts come to mind. Also, add to that list the healthy goodness of Mortlock oats.

Nutty in flavor and chewy, oats are grown in the fields and valleys of Western Australia.

From planting to packaging, West Australian Mortlock oats undergo a chemical-free cycle. The soil where the oats will be planted is well prepared and once planted, the crop is thoroughly cared for without using man-made fertilizers and pesticides to ensure every grain is free from harmful chemicals. Instead, the region's rich soil, ideal climate and clean environment guarantee the plant's natural and healthy growth. Upon harvesting, these naturally healthy oats are immediately kept in a sealed storage to protect the grains and seal in their natural goodness before drying and packaging. Thus, providing you with all the richness and flavor of oats... naturally.

As an everyday nutritional fare, nothing beats the benefits of Mortlock oats grown in Western Australia. Compared to oats from other regions, Mortlock oats contain the highest level of soluble fiber, protein, beta-glucan, minerals and polyunsaturated acids. Mortlock oats are proven effective in reducing cholesterol and blood sugar levels in the body especially if combined with proper diet and regular exercise.

Get the healthy taste of Australia with every serving of Ideal Australia Harvest Oats. Made from 100 percent premium West Australian Mortlock oats, they are very nutritious and tasty. These oats make for a delightful ingredient in making cookies, cakes and other recipes.

Ideal Australia Harvest Oats is available in supermarkets and groceries nationwide in the following variants: Instant Oats (perfect for people-on-the-go); Quick Cooking Oats (most popular variant), Old Fashioned Rolled Oats (ideal for baking), Oat Bran (best for diabetics); and Honey Toasted Muesli (mixture of fruits, nuts and oats).

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Cooking show with a twist

GOURMETS, culinary enthusiasts or those who simply love food, will have their hands full as they watch a new television cooking show on RPN-9 beginning this Saturday, April 24, 11-11:30 a.m., and every week thereafter. Simply called "Chefs on the Road," the title already suggests the format of the show, a cooking-cum-travelogue TV show.

Hosted by the youthful but highly experienced culinary tandem of chef Kim Santos and chef Bubbles Lerias, the show brings a fresh new approach to culinary TV shows where the viewers will be taken on a vicarious trip to scenic and popular locales in the country, while the program hosts dish out delicious and mouthwatering food finds in the featured place.

For its maiden telecast, "Chefs on the Road" will bring you to the picture-perfect Puerto Del Sol, an exclusive beach resort and hotel club in Bolinao, Pangasinan, overlooking the China Sea. This is another quality television production of Cirenna Corporate Medium (9368163 or 4548292) with megman Rico Samarista directing.

Hair Loss:

An Embarrassing Problem for Women

When you have hair loss, it's not only your "crowning glory" that suffers. It will even hurt your appearance and self-esteem. You'll always worry about how hair loss will affect your looks. You'll feel helpless when your lush hair continues to thin out. If you don't know whom to turn to, come to **Svenson International.** Our consultants will ease your worries by thoroughly analyzing your hair loss problem and recommend the appropriate solution to restore your hair's thick, lush look.

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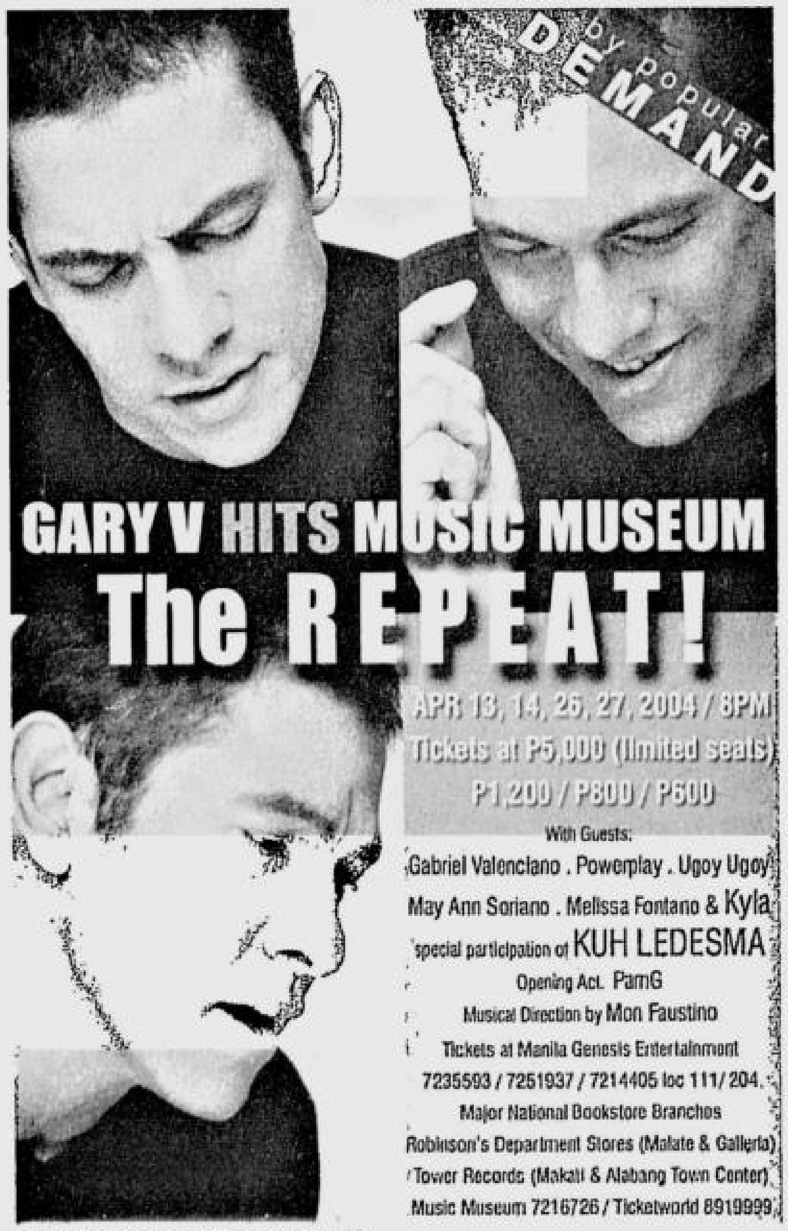

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THE CONSUMER

Marietta Velasco Giron

MOTORISTS using the North Luzon Expressway will notice that it takes less time now to travel from Balintawak to Sta. Ines, Pampanga, a good 84-kilometer stretch. Gone, too, are the bumps and potholes.

At the rate work is progressing, we can look forward to the early completion of the project. Developers predict that, by July, the main line roadwork between Balintawak and Sta. Ines would be opened to the public.

And they foresee that the entire project would be completed in 4-5 months, ahead of the February 2005 schedule. The developers add they use only high-quality asphalt for the pavement.

Renato Banares, senior vice president for program management of the Manila North Tollways Corp. (MNTC) says:

"Now in use are 336 out of the total 433 km main thoroughfare. Rehabilitation and expansion of this 30-year-old obsolete highway includes construction of new interchanges, flyovers and toll plazas... MNTC will (also) provide modern amenities... such as electronic message signboards, emergency call boxes, fiber optic communications and specialized cameras. With the completion of the project, the obsolete thoroughfare will have the best toll road system in the country."

Agencies in charge of the NLEX development are the Philippine National Construction Corporation, Leighton Contractors, MNTC, Toll Regulatory Board and Department of Public Works and Highways.

For Metro Manila only

Ma. Meliza Romillo says the new express money order remittance service of the Bank of Philippine Islands (BPI) apparently has limited coverage. She found this out when she sent an express money order in January to Bais, Negros Occidental.

She explained, "I purchased an Express Money Order (EMO) from the BPI Alabang Town Center branch... to send P3,000 to my househelp's relatives in Bais... I sent the (EMO card with my name and that of the recipient) to Bais and deposited P3,000 to the account so the (recipient) could withdraw the money."

But Romillo said both recipient and BPI's branch manager in Bais called to say the money could not be withdrawn because the bank did not have any facility in Negros Occidental to encode a PIN (personal identification number) for the card.

She had to deposit another P3,000 to an old savings account. When the EMO card was returned, she had to go to BPI Alabang for PIN encoding so she could withdraw the money she was trying to send by express money order.

Romillo said the EMO was a good idea because it involved zero maintaining balance and zero service fee. However, it should have been made clear that coverage was limited. She added that she filed a complaint (No. I-709-028-71) with BPI in January but had yet to hear from the bank.

(The BPI customer service has promised to look into the complaint.)

Stuck with a lemon

Jose Valdez is at his wits' end. The sound system of his new SUV (service utility vehicle) has a hissing sound which the accredited repair shop failed to fix. There is also something wrong with the brake booster.

The car dealer had made three visits to diagnose the defect and document it on video. The tape was sent to the main office in Singapore for approval of warranty extension.

Valdez is just one of many unhappy buyers.

More recently, the buyer of a top-of-the line bike asked for help to get his money back. He complained, "I paid a P12,000 deposit for a new bike, not for the rusty one I got with bad brakes that almost cost me an arm when they failed and I hit a tree. All I want is my money back. Can you help?"

The Department of Trade and Industry says Article 110, Chapter V of the Consumer Act of the Philippines, or R.A. 7393, protects consumers from a bad buy or service.

The article says: "Liability for Product and Service Imperfection—The suppliers of the durable or non-durable consumer products are jointly liable for imperfections in quality that render the products unfit or inadequate for consumption for which they are designed or decrease their value, and for those resulting from inconsistency with the information provided on the container, packaging, labels or publicity messages/advertisement, with due regard to the variations resulting from their nature, the consumer being able to demand replacement to the imperfect parts.

"If the imperfection is not corrected within thirty (30) days, the consumer may alternatively demand at his option:

a.) the replacement of the product by another of the same kind, in a perfect state of use;

b.) the immediate reimbursement of the amount paid, with monetary updating, without prejudice to any losses and damages;

c.) a proportionate price reduction."

DTI Underscretary Jaime Olmos advised aggrieved buyers to send a formal complaint "in three sets" to the office of Director Luwina S. Enecio, DTI-National Capital Region, 12/F Trafalgar Plaza Building, 105 H.V. Dela Costa Street, Salcedo Village, Makati City. They should indicate the name and address of the establishment, the circumstances (time frame) and attach copies of relevant documents.

Send consumer complaints and comments to giron@mailstation.net

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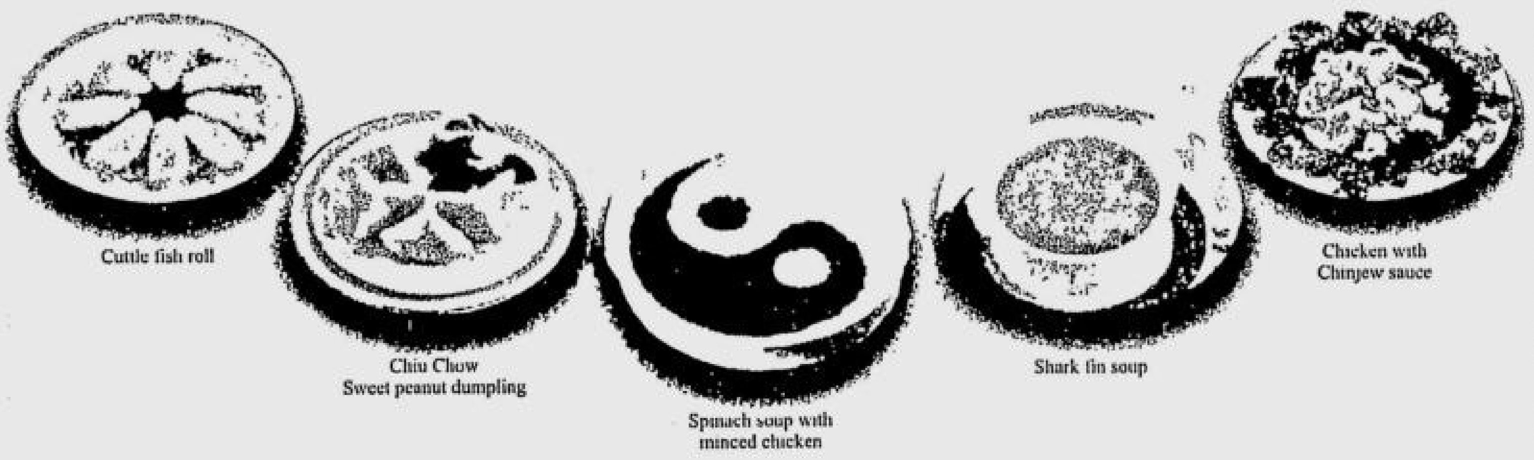
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